THE CHARACTER

Of a Sound Confirmed

CHRISTIAN.

As also,

2. Of a Weak Christian: And
3. Of a Seeming Christian.

Written to imprint upon mens minds the true *Idea* or (conception)

OF

Godliness and *Christianity.*

By *Richard Baxter.*

The Second Part of the Directions for Weak Christians.

LONDON,
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THE PREFACE TO THE SECOND PART;

Directed to my worthy Friend, *Henry Ashurst*, Esquire, Citizen of *London*.

Dear and faithful Friend.

When this Book was Printed and passing into the World, without the ordinary ornament of a prefixed honoured Name, my thoughts reduced me into the common way, though not upon the com-

mon reaſons; aſſuring me that your name, would be more than an accident or ceremony to ſuch a diſcourſe as this; even a part more ſubſtantial than a Map is in a Treatiſe of Geography, or the well-cut Figures in Tractates of Anatomy. Diſcourſes of Navigation, Architecture, Muſick, &c. may almoſt as hopefully inſtruct the Learners, without any viſible operations or effects, as the Characters of well-tempered Chriſtians, can duly inform the minds of ignorant ungodly men, of ſo Divine a thing as Chriſtianity and Godlineſs, without acquaintance with ſome ſuch *Perſons*, in whom theſe Characters are manifeſtly exemplified. Wiſe and holy *precepts*, are to make wiſe and holy *perſons*: it is ſuch *Perſons* as well as ſuch *Precepts* which bear the image of God: which indeed is moſt perfect in exactneſs and *integrity* in the *precepts*; (for in

non them

them is no imperfection or errour, as they are of God;) But it is of greater *final Excellency*, in *activity* and *usefulness* as it is in *men*. And therefore as God delighteth in his *servants*, and is Glorified in and by *them* in the world; so Satan usually chooseth such *Persons*, to reproach and make odious to the ignorant, rather than the *holy Precepts* immediately, by which they are directed; both because their *Holiness* is most *exasperating* by *activity*; and also most lyable to calumny and contempt, through imperfection, and mixture of that which indeed is worthy of dislike. Till *Godliness* and *Christianity* be visible in full *perfection*, and elevated above the *contradiction* of *folly*, and the *contempt* of *pride*, the blind distracted minds of hardened forsaken sinners, will not acknowledge its divine celestial nature, and worth: But *then* it will be too late to become partakers

of it: They must both *know* and *possess* it in its *infancy* and *minority*, who will ever enjoy it in its heavenly dignity and glory. If seasonable illumination and conversion, confute not the deceits and slanders which pride and ignorance have entertained, the too-late confutation of them by death and their following experience, will make them wish, that they had been wise at cheaper rates; when it will be in vain to cry, *Give us of your Oyle, for our Lamps are out*, Mat. 25. 8.

But while I offer your name to the malicious world, as an instance of the temper which I here describe, I intend it not as a *singular* though an *eminent* instance: For through the great mercy of God, there are thousands of examples of *confirmed* Christians, among us in this Land, even before those eyes which will not see them. But it is not Catalogues but single names, which Writers have used in

this

this way. And why may I not take the advantage of Cuſtome, to leave to the World the teſtimony of my eſtimation and great reſpects, to ſo deſerving a perſon of the primitive Chriſtian Catholick temper: And to let them know, what ſort of men were my moſt dear and faithful friends? And alſo thus to expreſs my love, by telling you cloſely *what you muſt be*, as well as by telling the World for their example, *what you are*. Upon theſe accounts, without your knowledge or conſent, I preſume thus to prefix your name, to this Treatiſe written long ago, but now publiſhed by

Your faithful Friend,

Rich. Baxter.

From my Lodging in *New-Priſon*, *June* 14. 1669.

ERRATA.

ERRATA.

Reader, When I had gathered the *Errata* I was separated by a Prison from those Collections; and having but two of the Sheets now at hand, I shall give you the *Errata* of *them* only.

IN the Contents. n. 15. for *Lovers of God* read *Love of God*. Pag. 163. l. 5. for *to fix* r. *and fix*. pag. 163. l. 18. blot out *that*. p. 164. l. 5. for *that* r. *than*. p. 169. l. 10. for *of* r. *for*. p. 170. l. 1. for *cart* r. *cure*. All the rest I have forgotten, save that somewhere I remember *filthy* for *fleshly*.

To

TO THE READER.

Readers,

IT is a matter of greater moment than I can expreſs, what *Idea* or *Image* of the nature of GODLINESS and CHRISTIANITY is *imprinted* upon *mens minds*: The deſcription which is *expreſſed* in the *ſacred Scriptures*, is true and full: The thing deſcribed is rational, pure, perfect, unblameable and amiable. That which is *expreſſed* in the *Lives* of the moſt, is nothing ſo; but is purblind, defiled, maimed, imperfect, culpable, and mixt with ſo much of the contrary quality, that to them that cannot diſtinguiſh the *Chaff* from the *Wheat*, the *Sickneſs* from the *Life*, it ſeemeth an *unreaſonable*, *fancifull*, *loathſome* and *vexatious* thing; and ſo far from being worthy to be preferred before all the Riches, Honours and Pleaſures of the world, that it ſeemeth worthy to be kept under as a troubler of

Kingdoms, Societies and Souls. And doubtless this *monstrous Expression* of many mens Lives, is because the *perfect expression* of it in Gods Word, hath not made a *true impression* upon the *Mind*, and consequently upon the *Heart*. For as it is *sound Doctrine* which must make *sound Christians*, so *Doctrine* worketh on the *will* and *affections* not as it is in *it self*, and as *delivered*, but as it is *understood*, *believed*, *remembred*, *considered*; even as it is *imprinted* on the *Mind*, and *used* by it. And *misapprehension*, *mistaken matter*, or *defective application*, may cause the Image on the Wax to be *imperfect*, though made by the most *perfect* Seal. So is it in this case; when one man doth *defectively understand* the Scripture-description of a godly man, or Christian; and another by misunderstanding mixeth *false conceptions* of his own; and another by a corrupt depraved will doth hinder the understanding from *believing*, or *remembring*, or *considering* and *using* what it partly apprehendeth; what wonder if the Godliness and Christianity in their hearts be unlike the Godliness and Christianity in the Scriptures: When the Law of God in *Nature* and *Scripture* is pure and uncorrupt, and the Law of God written imperfectly on the *heart*, is there mixt with the carnal Law *in their members*, no marvel if

be *expressed* accordingly in their lives. I have therefore much endeavoured in all my writings, and especially in this, to draw out the full pourtraiture of a *christian* or *godly man indeed*, and to describe *Gods Image* on the soul of man, in such a manner as tendeth to the just information of the Readers mind, and the filling up of the wants, and rectifying the errors which may be found in his former conceptions of it. And I do purposely inculcate the same things oft, in several writings (as when I preached I did in all my Sermons) that the Reader may find that I bring him not undigested needless novelties, and that the frequent repetition of them may help to make the deeper and fuller impression: For my work is to subserve the Holy Ghost, in *putting Gods Law into* mens *hearts*, and *writing it* out truly, clearly and fully *upon their inward parts*; that they may be *made such* themselves, by understanding throughly what they *must be*, and what a *solid Christian* is: And that thus they may be born *again* by *the incorruptible, immortal seed*, the *Word of God* which will *live and abide for ever*; and may *purifie their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. 1. 22, 23, 25. He is the best Lawyer, Physician, Souldier, &c. who hath his Doctrine in his brain, and not only in his Books; and hath

digested his reading into an intellectual systeme and habit of knowledge. If Ministers had an hundred times over repeated the *integral pourtraiture* or *character* of a *sound Christian*, till it had been as familiar to the *minds* and *memories* of their hearers, as is the description of a Magistrate, a Physician, a School-master, a Husbandman, a Shepherd, and such things as they are well acquainted with, it would have been a powerfull means to make *sound Christians*. But when mens minds conceive of a *Christian*, as a man that differeth from Heathens and Infidels, in nothing but holding the *Christian Opinions*, and using different *words* and *ceremonies* of worship, and such like, no wonder if such be but opinionative lifeless Christians: And if their Religion *make them no better* than a *Seneca* or *Plutarch*, I shall never believe that they are any surer to be saved than they. And such a sort of men there are, that suppose Christianity to consist but of these three parts; 1. The *Christian Doctrine acknowledged* (which they call *Faith*.) 2. The *Orders* and *Ordinances* of the *Christian Church* and *Worship*, submitted to, and decently used (which they call *Godliness*.) And 3. The *heart* and *life* of a *Cato*, *Cicero*, or *Socrates* adjoyned: But all that goeth beyond this, (which is the *Life* of Chri-

stianity

ſtianity and Godlineſs, a Lively Faith, and Hope, and Love, a Heavenly and Holy mind and life, from the renewing indwelling Spirit of God, which is deſcribed in this Treatiſe) they are ſtrangers to it, and take it to be but fanſie and hypocriſie. Theſe *No-Chriſtians* do much to reduce the Church to *Infidelity*; that there may be indeed *No Chriſtians* in the world. For my part I muſt confeſs, if there were no better Chriſtians in the world than theſe, I think I ſhould be no Chriſtian my ſelf: And if Chriſt *made men no better* than the Religion of *Socrates*, *Cato* or *Seneca*, and did no more to the reparation and perfecting of mens hearts and lives, I ſhould think no better of the *Chriſtian Religion* than of theirs: For the *means* is to be eſtimated by the *End* and *Uſe*: And that's the beſt Phyſician that hath the Remedies which are fitteſt to work the cure. If God had not acquainted me with a ſort of men that have really more Holineſs, Mortification, Spirituality, Love to God, and to one another, and even to enemies, and more heavenly deſires, expectations and delights, than theſe men before deſcribed have, it would have been a very great hinderance to my Faith.

The ſame may I ſay of thoſe that place Godlineſs and Chriſtianity only in hold-

ing ſtrict opinions, and in affected needleſs ſingularities, and in the fluent Oratory and length of prayer, and avoiding other mens forms and modes of worſhip, and in any thing ſhort of a *Renewed, Holy, Heavenly* heart and life.

And undoubtedly if a *true, full* Character of *Godlineſs* had been imprinted in their minds, we ſhould never have ſeen the Profeſſors of it ſo blotted with ſenſuality, ſelfiſhneſs, pride, ambition, worldlineſs, diſtruſt of God, ſelf-conceitedneſs, hereſie, ſchiſm, rebellions, unquietneſs, impatiency, unmerciſulneſs, and cruelty to mens ſouls and bodies, as we have ſeen them in this age; and all this juſtified as conſiſtent with Religion.

And I fear that becauſe this Treatiſe will ſpeak to few that are not ſome way *guilty*, every face which hath a ſpot or blemiſh will be offended with the glaſs: and leſt the faulty will ſay that I particularly intended to diſgrace them: But I muſt here tell the Reader, to prevent his miſunderſtanding, that if he ſhall imagine that I have my eyes upon particular parties, and as a diſcontented perſon do intend to blame thoſe that differ from myſelf, or to grieve inferiours, or diſhonour and aſperſe ſuperiours, they will miſtake me, and wrong themſelves, as blame, who

professedly intend but the true Description of *sound Christians*, *diseased Christians*, and *seeming Christians*.

And for the *manner* of this writing, I am conscious it hath but little to [illegible] it. The *matter* is that for which it is published. The Lord *Verulam* in his Essays truly saith, that *much reading* [illegible] *full*; *much discourse doth make one ready*, *and much writing doth make a man exact*. Though I have had my part of all these means, yet being parted five years from my *Books*, and three years from my *Preaching*, the effects may decay; and you must expect neither Quotations or Oratory Testimonies or ornament of stile: But having not yet wholly ceased from *Writing*, I may own so much of the *exactness* as will allow me to intreat the Reader, not to use me as many have done; who by over-looking some *one word*, have made the sense another thing, and have made it a crime to be *exact in Writing*, because they cannot or will not be *exact in Reading*, or charitable or humane in interpreting.

THE

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THE CHARACTER OF

1 *A Sound Confirmed Christian,*
2 *And of the Weak Christian,*
3 *And of the Seeming Christian.*

IN the Explication of the Text, which I made the ground of the foregoing discourse, I have shewed you that there is a Degree of Grace to be expected and sought after by all true Christians, which putteth the Soul into a *sound, confirmed, radicated* state, in comparison of that *weak, diseased, tottering* condition, which most Christians now continue in. And I have shewed you how desireable a state that is, and what calamities follow the languishing unhealthfull state even of such as may be saved. And indeed did we but rightly understand, how deeply the errors and sins

of many well-meaning Christians, have wounded the interest of Religion in this age, and how hainously they have dishonoured God, and exalted the enemies of holyness to blaspheme, and hardened thousands in Popery and Ungodliness, in probability to their perdition: Had we well observed when Gods Judgements have begun, and understood what sins have caused our Warres, and Plagues and Flames, and worse than all these, our great heart-divisions, and Church-distractions and convulsions; we should ere this have given over the flattering of our selves and one another, in such a Heaven-provoking state; and the ostentation of that little goodness, which hath been eclipsed by such lamentable evils. And instead of these, we should have betaken our selves to the exercise of such a serious deep Repentance as the quality of our sins, and the greatness of Gods Chastisements do require. It is a dolefull case to see how light many make of all the rest of their distempers, when once they think that they have so much Grace and Mortification, as is absolutely necessary to save their souls: And expect that Preachers should say little to weak Christians, but words of comfort, setting forth their happiness: And yet if one of them, when he hath the Gout, or Stone, or Collick, or Dropsie, doth send for a Physitian, he would think himself derided or abused, if his Physitian instead of curing his disease, should only *comfort* him by telling him that he is not dead. What excellent disputations have *Cicero* and *Seneca*, the *Platonists* and *Stoicks*, to prove that *Virtue is of it self sufficient to make Man happy?* And yet many Christians live as if *Holiness* were but the *way* and *means* to their felicity, or at

best but a *small part* of their felicity it self; or as if felicity it self grew burdensome, or were not desireable in this life; or a small degree of it were as good as a greater.

And too many mistake the will of God, and the nature of Sanctification, and place their Religion in the hot prosecution of those mistakes: They make a composition of *error* and *passion*, and an *unyielding stiffness* in them; and *siding with the Church or party* which maintaineth them, and an *uncharitable censuring* those that are against them, and an *unpeaceable contending* for them. And this composition they mistake for Godliness, especially if there be but a few drams of Godliness and Truth in the composition, though corrupted and over-powered by the rest.

For these miscarriages of many well-meaning zealous persons, the Land mourneth, the Churches groan; Kingdoms are disturbed by them; Families are disquieted by them; Godliness is hindered, and much dishonoured by them; the Wicked are hardened by them, and encouraged to hate and blaspheme and oppose Religion; the glory of the Christian Faith is obscured by them; and the Infidel, Mahometan and Heathen World, are kept from Faith in Jesus Christ, and many millions of Souls destroyed by them. I mean, by the miscarriages of the weaker sort of Christians, and by the wicked lives of those carnal Hypocrites, who for custome or worldly interest do profess that Christianity which was never received by their hearts.

And all this is much promoted by their indiscretion, who are so intent upon the consolatory opening of the safety and happiness of Believers,

that they omit the due explication of their Description, their Dangers and their Duties.

One part of this too much neglected work I have endeavoured to perform in the foregoing Treatise; Another I shall attempt in this second Part. There are five Degrees or ranks of true Christians, observable: 1. The *Weakest* Christians, who have only the Essentials of Christianity, or very little more: As Infants that are alive, but of little strength or use to others. 2. Those that are *lapsed* into some wounding sin, though not into a state of damnation; Like men at age, who have lost the use of some one member, for the present, though they are strong in other parts. 3. Those that having the *Integral parts* of Christianity in a considerable measure, are in a *sound* and *healthfull state*; though neither *perfect*, nor of the highest form or rank of Christians in this life, nor without such infirmities, as are the matter of their daily *Watchfulness* and *Humiliation*. 4. Those that are so strong as to attain extraordinary degrees of grace, who are therefore comparatively called *Perfect*, as *Mat.* 5. 45. 5 Those that have an *absolute Perfection* without sin, that is, The Heavenly Inhabitants.

Among all these, it is the *third* sort or degree, which I have here characterized, and upon *both*, the *first sort* and the *Hypocrite*. I meddle not now with the Lapsed Christian as such, nor with those Giants in holiness of extraordinary strength, nor with the perfect blessed Saints in Heaven: But, it is the Christian who hath attained that confirmation in grace, and composed, quiet, fruitfull state, which we might ordinarily expect, if we were industrious, whose Image or Character

I

I shall now present you with: I call him blessed *A Christian indeed*, in allusion to Christs description of *Nathaniel*, *Joh.* 1. 47. and as we commonly use that word, for one that answereth his own profession without any notable dishonour or defect. As we say, such a man is a *Scholar indeed*; and not as signifying his meer sincerity. I mean one whose heart and life is so conform to the Principles, the Rule and the Hopes of Christianity, that in the Honour of Christ, the true Nature of our Religion is discernible in his conversation, *Matt.* 5. 16. In whom an impartial Infidel might perceive the true nature of the Christian Faith and Godliness. If the World were filled with such living Images of Christ, who like true Regenerate Children resemble their Heavenly Father, Christianity would not have met with so much prejudice, nor had so many enemies in the World, nor would so many millions have been kept in the darkness of Heathenism and Infidelity, by flying from Christians, as a sort of people that are *common* and *unclean*.

Among Christians, there are *Babes*, that must be fed with *milk*, and not with *strong meat*, that are *unskilfull in the word of righteousness*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12, 13, 14. *Heb.* 5. 12, 13, 14. and *Novices*, who are unsetled, and in danger of an overthrow, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *Joh.* 15. 3, 5, &c. In these the nature and excellency of Christianity, is little more apparent, than *Reason* in a little childe. And there are *strong, confirmed* Christians, who by *reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, Heb. 5. 13, 14. and who shew forth the glory of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light; of whom

God himself may say to Satan and their malicious enemies, as once of *Job*, *Hast thou not seen my servant Job*, &c. This *Christian indeed* I shall now describe to you, both to confute the Infidel slanders of Christianity, and to unteach men their *false descriptions* which have caused the presumption of the profane, and the irregularities of erroneous Sectaries; and to tell you what manner of persons they be, that God is honoured by; and what you must be if you will well understand your own Religion. Be *Christians indeed*, and you will have the *Comforts indeed* of Christianity, and will finde that its *Fruits* and *Joyes* are not *dreams* and *shadows* and *imaginations*, if you content not your selves with an *imagination*, *dream* and *shadow* of Christianity, or with some clouded spark or buryed seed.

The Characters.

I. A CHRISTIAN INDEED, (by which I still mean, a *sound confirmed Christian*) is one that contenteth not himself to *have a seed* or *Habit* of *Faith*, but he *Liveth by Faith*, as the *Sensualist liveth by sight* or *sense*: Not putting out the eye of sense, not living as if he had no Body, nor lived not in a world of sensible Objects: But as he is a Reasonable creature, which exalteth him above the sensitive Nature, so Faith is the true information of his Reason, about those high and excellent things, which must take him up above things sensible: He hath so firm a *Belief of the Life to come*, as *procured by Christ*, and *promised in the Gospel*, as that it serveth him

him for the Government of his Soul, as his bodily sight doth for the conduct of his Body. I say not that he is assaulted with no temptations, nor that his Faith is perfect in degree, nor that believing moveth him as *passionately* as *sight* or *sense* would do: But it doth *effectually* move him through the course and tenour of his life, to *do these things for the life to come*, which he would do if he saw the Glory of Heaven: and to *shun* these things *for the avoiding* of damnation, which he would shun, if he saw the flames of Hell. Whether he do these things so *fervently* or not, his Belief is *powerfull, efficacious* and *victorious*. Let sight and sense invite him to their Objects, and entice him to sin, and forsake his God, the objects of Faith shall prevail against them, in the heart of an even, a constant and resolved life. It is things *unseen* which he taketh for his *treasure*, and which have his heart and *hope*, and *chiefest labours*. All things else which he hath to do, are but subservient to his *Faith* and *Heavenly* interest, as his sensitive faculties are ruled by his Reason. His *Faith* is not only his *Opinion*, which teacheth him to choose what *Church* or *Party* he will be of: but it is his *Intellectual Light*, by which he *liveth*, and in the confidence and comfort of which he dyeth, 2 Cor. 5. 7, 8. *For we walk by faith, not by sight. We groan to be cloathed upon with our heavenly house. Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.* Heb. 10. 38. *Now the just shall live by faith.* Heb. 11. 1. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Most of the examples in *Heb.* 11. do shew you this truth, that true Christians *live* and govern their actions, by the *firm Belief* of the promise of

God, and of another Life when this is ended. v. 7. *By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* V. 10. *Abraham looked for a City which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Moses feared not the wrath of the King: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible*, v. 27. So the three witnesses, *Dan.* 3. and *Daniel* himself, ch. 6. And all Believers have lived this life, as *Abraham* the Father of the faithfull did; who, as it is said of him, Rom. 4. 20. *Staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.* The Faith of a Christian is truly *Divine*; and he knoweth that *Gods truth* is as certain as *sight* it self can be; however *sight* be apter to move the *passions*: Therefore, if you can judge but what a Rational man would be, if he saw *Heaven and Hell*, and all that God had appointed us to Believe, then you may conjecture what a confirmed Christian is; (though sense do cause more sensible apprehensions.)

2. The *weak Christian* also hath a *faith*, that is *Divine*, as *caused by God*, and *resting on his word and truth*. And he *so far liveth* by this Faith, as that it commandeth and guideth the *scope* and *drift* of his heart and life: But he believeth with a great deal of staggering and unbelief: And therefore his *Hopes* are interrupted by his troublesom doubts and fears; and the dimness and languor of his Faith is seen in the faintness of his desires; and the many blemishes of his Heart and Life: And *sight* and *sensual objects* are so much the more powerfull with him, by how much the *light* and *life* of faith is dark and weak.

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3. The *Hypocrite* or *best of the unregenerate*, believeth but either with a *Humane faith*, which resteth but on the Word of *Man*, or else with a *blind opinionative faith*, which is overpowered by *infidelity*, or is like the *dreaming* thoughts of a man asleep, which stirre him not to action: He *walketh* by *sight* and not by *faith*. For he hath not a Faith that will overpower Sense, and sensual objects, *Jam.* 2. 14. *Mat.* 13. 22.

II. 1. *A Christian indeed* not only *knoweth why* he is a Christian, but seeth *those Reasons* for his Religion, which disgrace all that the cunningest Atheist or Infidel can say against it: and so far fully confirm and establish him, that emergent difficulties, temptations and objections, do not at all stagger him, or raise any deliberate doubts in him of the truth of the Word of God: He seeth *first the natural evidence* of those *foundation-truths* which *Nature* it self maketh known: (as that there is a God of infinite Being, Power, Wisdom and Goodness, the Creator, the Owner, the Ruler, and the Father, Felicity and End of man; that we owe him all our love and service; that none of our fidelity shall be in vain or unrewarded, and none shall be finally a loser by his duty; that man who is naturally governed by the hopes and fears of another life, is made and liveth for that other life, where his Soul shall be sentenced by God his Judge to happiness or misery, &c.) And then he discerneth the *attestation of God* to those *supernatural*, superadded Revelations of the Gospel, containing the Doctrine of mans Redemption: And he seeth how wonderfully *those* are built upon the *former*, and how excellently the *Creators* and *Redeemers Doctrine* and Lawes agree; and how much

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countenance *supernatural* truths receive from the *presupposed naturals*: so that he doth not adhere to Christ and Religion by the meer engagements of education, friends or worldly advantages, nor by a *blind resolution*, which wanteth nothing but a strong temptation (from a Deceiver or a worldly Interest) to shake or overthrow it: But he is built upon the Rock, which will stand in the assault of Satans storms, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. *Mat.* 16. 18. & 13. 23. & 7. 25. *Joh.* 6. 68, 69.

2. But a *weak Christian* hath but a dim and general kind of knowledge of the reasons of his Religion, or at least but a *weak apprehension* of them, though he have the best and most unanswerable reasons. And either he is confident in the dark upon grounds which he cannot make good, and which want but a strong assault to shake them; or else he is troubled and ready to stagger at every difficulty which occurreth. Every *hard saying* in the Scripture doth offend him. And every seeming contradiction shaketh him. And the depth of mysteries, which pass his understanding, do make him say as *Nicodemus* of Regeneration, *How can these things be?* And if he meet with the objections of a cunning Infidel he is unable so to defend the truth, and clear his way through them, as to come off unwounded and unshaken, (and to be the more confirmed in the truth of his belief, by discerning the vanity of all that is said against it. *Heb.* 5. 12, 13. *Matth.* 15. 16. & *Cor.* 14. 20. *Job* 12. 16.

3. The *strong Christian* either hath no solid Reasons at all for his Religion, or else if he have the best, he hath no sound apprehension of them.

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but though he be never so learned and orthodox, and can preach and defend the Faith, it is not so rooted in him as to endure the tryall; but if a strong temptation from *subtilty* or *carnal interest* assault him, you shall see that he was built upon the sand, and that there was in him a secret root of bitterness, and an evil heart of unbelief, which causeth him to depart from the living God, *Heb.* 3. 12. *Matth.* 13. 20, 21, 22. *Matth.* 17. 16, 17. *Heb.* 12. 15. *Job.* 6. 60, 64, 66. 1 *Tim.* 6. 10, 11.

III. 1. A *Christian indeed*, is not only confirmed in the *essentials* of Christianity, but he hath a *clear delightfull sight* of those *usefull truths*, which are the *Integrals* of Christianity, and are built upon the fundamentals, and are the branches of the main points of Faith. Though he see not all the lesser Truths (which are branched out at last into innumerable particles) yet he seeth the *main body* of sacred Verities, delivered by Christ for mans salvation; and seeth them *methodically* in their proper places, and seeth how one supports another, and in how beautifull an order and connexture they are placed: And as he sticketh not in the *bare Principles*, so he receiveth all these additions of *knowledge*, not *notionally* only, but *practically*, as the food on which his Soul must live, *Heb.* 5. 13, 14. & 6. 1, 2, &c. *Matth.* 13. 11. *Eph.* 3. 18 & 3. 18, 19. *Joh.* 13. 17.

2. A *weak Christian* (in knowledge) besides the Principles or Essentials of Religion, doth know but a few disordered scattered Truths; which are also but *half known*, because while he hath some knowledge of those points, he is ignorant of many other, which are needfull to the supporting,

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and clearing, and improving of them; And because he knoweth them not in their places, and order, and relation, and aspect upon other Truths. And therefore if Temptations be strong, and come with advantage, the weak Christian in such points is easily drawn into many errors; and thence into great confidence and conceitedness in those Errors; and thence into sinfull dangerous courses in the prosecution and practice of those Errors; Such are like *children tost up and down, and carried to and fro by every winde of doctrine, through the cunning sleight and subtilty of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*, Eph. 4. 14. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Col. 2. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 7.

3. The *seeming Christian* having no *saving practical* knowledge of the *Essentials* of Christianity themselves, doth therefore either neglect to know the rest, or knoweth them but notionally, as common Sciences, and subjecteth them all to his Worldly interest: And therefore is still of that side or party in Religion, which upon the account of safety, honour or preferment, his flesh commandeth him to follow. Either he is still on the greater, rising side, and of the Rulers Religion, be it what it will; or if he dissent, it is in pursuit of another game, which Pride or fleshly ends have started. 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. *Gal.* 3. 3. *Joh.* 9. 22. & 12. 42, 43. *Matth.* 13. 21. 22.

IV. 1. The *Christian indeed*, hath not only *Reasons* for his Religion, but also hath an *inward connatural principle*, even the *spirit of Christ*, which is as a *New-nature*, *inclining* and *enlivening* him to a holy life: whereby he *mindeth* and *savoureth* the things of the Spirit: Not that his *Nature* doth work *blindly*, as Nature doth in the irrational creatures;

tures; but at least it much *imitateth Nature* as it is found in *Rational creatures*, where the *Inclination* is *necessary*, but the *Operations free*, and subject to Reason: It is a *spiritual appetite* in the *Rational appetite*, even the *will*, and a *spiritual visive disposition* in the understanding: Not a *faculty* in a *faculty*; but the *right disposition* of the faculties to their highest objects, to which they are by corruption made unsuitable. So that it is neither a *proper power* in the *Natural sense*, nor a *meer act*, but neerest to the nature of a *seminal disposition* or *habit*. It is the *health* and *rectitude* of the *faculties* of the Soul. Even as *Nature* hath made the *understanding* disposed to *Truth* in generall, and the *will* disposed or inclined to *Good* in generall, and to *self-preservation* and *felicity* in particular; so the Spirit of Christ doth *dispose* the understanding to spiritual truth, to know God and the matters of salvation, and doth *incline* the *will* to *God* and *Holiness*; not *blindly*, as they are *unknown*; but to love and serve a *known God*. So that whether this be *properly* or only *analogically* called a *Nature*, or rather should be called a *Habit*, I determine not; but certainly it is a fixed *Disposition* and *Inclination*, which Scripture calleth the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and [*the seed of God abiding in us*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. But most usually it is called [*the Spirit of God, or of Christ in us*: Rom. 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ the same is none of his.* 1 Cor. 12. 13. *By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,* —— Therefore we are said *to be in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit, and by the Spirit to mortifie the deeds of the Body*, Rom. 8. 1. 9. 13. And it is called, *the Spirit of the Son, and the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father*;

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or are inclined to God, as children to their father; and the *Spirit of grace and supplication*, Zech. 12. 10. Rom. 8. 15, 23, 26. Gal. 4. 6. & 5. 17, 18. Eph. 2. 18. & 4. 3, 4. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 1. By this *Spirit* and the fruits of it, we are called *New Creatures*, and *quickened* and *made alive* to God, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 1, 5. Rom. 6. 11, 13. It is a great controversie, whether this Holy disposition and inclination, was *Natural* to *Adam* or not, and consequently, whether it be a *natural nature* in us, or not? It was so *natural to him*, as *Health* is natural to the body, but not so natural as to be a *Necessitating* Principle, nor so as to be inseparable and unloseable.

2. This same *Spirit* and holy inclination is in the *weakest Christian* also, but in a small degree, and remisly operating, so as that the fleshly inclination oft seemeth to be the stronger, while he judgeth by its passionate struglings within him: Though indeed the Spirit of life doth not only strive, but conquer in the main, even in the weakest Christians, *Rom.* 8. 9. *Gal.* 5. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

3. The *seeming Christian* hath only the *unfruitful motions* of the Spirit to a *Holy Life*, and *effectual motions*, and inward dispositions to some *common duties* of Religion: And from these with the *natural principles* of *self-love* and *common honesty*, with the outward perswasions of company and advantages, his Religion is maintained, without the Regeneration of the Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 6.

V. From hence it followeth, 1. That a *Christian indeed* doth not serve God for *fear* only, but for *love*; even for *love* both of *himself*, and of his *holy work* and *service*: Yea, the strong Christians Love

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to God and Holiness, is not only greater than his Love to Creatures, but greater than his fear of wrath and punishment. The Love of God constraineth him to duty, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. therefore the Gospel cannot be obeyed without it. He saith not, O that this were no duty, and O that this forbidden thing were lawfull, (Though his Flesh say so, the Spirit which is the predominant part doth not:) But he saith, *O how I love thy Law! O that my wayes were so directed that I might keep thy statutes!* Psal. 119. 5. For the *spirit is willing* even when the *flesh is weak*: He serveth not God against his will; but his *will* is to serve him more and better than he doth: He longeth to *be perfect*, and *perfectly* to do the will of God, and taketh the remnant of his sinfull infirmities to be a kind of *bondage* to him, which he groaneth to be delivered from: To will even perfection is *present with him*, though not *perfectly*; and though he do not all that he willeth: And this is the true meaning of *Pauls* complaints, *Rom.* 7. Because the flesh warreth against the Spirit, he cannot do the good that he would, that is, he cannot be perfect, for so he would be, *Gal.* 5. 17. His *love* and *will* excells his practice.

2. The *weak Christian* also hath *more love to God* and *holiness* than to the world and fleshly pleasure; But yet his *fear* of punishment is greater than his Love to *God* and *Holiness*. To have *no Love* to God is inconsistent with a state of Grace, and so it is to have *less love* to *God* than to the world, and less love to holiness than to sin; But to have more Fear than Love is consistent with sincerity of Grace; Yea, the weak Christians love

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to God and Holiness is joyned with so much backwardness and averseness, and interrupted with weariness, and with the carnall allurements and diversions of the Creature, that he cannot easily perceive whether his love and willingness be sincere or not: He goeth on in a course of duty, but so heavily, that he scarce knoweth whether his love or loathing of it be the greater. He goeth to it as a sick man to his meat, or labour: All that he doth is with so much pain and unpleasedness, that to his *feeling* his *aversness* seemeth greater than his *willingness*, were it not that *necessity* maketh him *willing*. For the habitual love and complacency which he hath towards God and Duty, is so oppressed by *fear*, and by *averseness*, that it is not so much felt *in act* as they.

3. A *seeming Christian* hath no true Love of God and Holiness at all, but some *uneffectual liking and wishes* which are overborn by a *greater backwardness*, and by a greater love to earthly things; so that *Fear* alone, without any true effectual Love, is the spring and principle of his Religion and obedience. God hath not his heart, when he draweth near him with his lips: He doth more than he *would* do, if he were not forced by *Necessity* and *Fear*; and had rather be excused, and lead another kind of life. *Mat.* 15. 8. *Isa.* 29. 13. Though *Necessity* and *fear* are very helpfull to the most sincere, yet *Fear alone* without *Love* or *Willingness* is a graceless state.

4. A *Christian indeed* doth *love God* in these three gradations: He loveth him *much* for his *mercy to himself*, and for that *Goodness* which consisteth in *benignity to himself*. But he loveth

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him more for his *Mercy to the Church*, and for that Goodness which consisteth in his Benignity to the Church. But he *Loveth* him *most of all* for his *Infinite perfections and essential excellencies*: His *Infinite Power, and Wisdom and Goodness* simply in himself considered. For he knoweth that *Love to him* self obligeth him to returns of Love: especially differencing saving grace. And he knoweth that the souls of *millions* are more worth incomparably then his own, and that God may be much more honoured by them than by him alone: And therefore he knoweth that the mercy to many is greater mercy, and a greater demonstration of the goodness of God; and therefore doth render him more amiable to man. *Rom.* 9. 3. And yet he knoweth that the Essential perfection and goodness of God as simply in himself and for himself is *much more* amiable than his Benignity to the creature: And that he that is the *first efficient* must needs be the *ultimate final cause* of all things: And that God is not finally for the creature; but the creature for God, (for all that he needeth it not) *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.* Rom. 11. 36. And as he is *Infinitely* better *than our selves*, so he is to be *better Loved* than our selves: As I love a *wise* and *vertuous* person, though he be one I never expect to *receive* any thing from, and therefore Love him for his *own sake*, and not for his benignity or usefulness to me: So must I love God most for his *essential perfections*, though his *benignity* also doth represent him amiable. As *he* is blindly selfish that would not rather himself be annihilated or perish, than whole Kingdoms should all perish, or the Sun be taken out of the world; (because that which is *best*

must be loved *as best*, and therefore be *best loved*: so is he more blind who in his estimative complacential Love, preferreth not *Infinite Eternal Goodness*, before such an imperfect silly creature as himself (or all the world): We are commanded to love our *Neighbour as our selves*, when *God* is to be loved *with all the heart and soul and might*, which therefore signifieth more than to love him *as our selves*, (or else he were to be loved no more than *our Neighbour*.) So that the strong Christian loveth God so much above himself, as that he accounteth himself and all his interests, as nothing in comparison of God, yea and *loveth himself* more for *God* than *for himself*: Though his *own salvation* be loved and desired by him, and *God* must be loved for his *mercy* and *benignity*, yet that *salvation* it self which he desireth, is nothing else but the *love of God*: Wherein his *love* is the *final felicitating act*, and *God* is the *final felicitating object*, and the *felicity* of *loving* is not first desired, but the *attractive object* doth draw out our love, and thereby make us *consequentially happy* in the injoying exercise thereof. Thus God is All and in all to the soul. *Psal.* 73.25. *Rom.* 11.36. 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Deut.* 6.5. *Mat.* 23.37. *Mat.* 19.17.

2. A *weak Christian* also *loveth God* as one that is infinitely *better than himself and all things*: (or else he did not love him at all *as God*.) But in the *exercise* he is so much in the minding of himself, and so seldom and weak in the contemplation of Gods perfections, that he *feeleth more* of his love to himself, than unto God: and feeleth more of his love to God as for the *Benefits* which he receiveth in and by himself, than as for his *lorn perfections*: yea and often feeleth the love of

himself to work more strongly than his Love to the *Church*, and all else in the world. The care of his own salvation is the highest principle which he ordinarily perceiveth in any great strength in him; and he is very little and weakly carried out to the Love of the whole Church, and to the Love of God above himself. *Phil.* 2, 20, 21, 22. 1 *Cor.* 10. 24. *Jer.* 45. 5.

3. A *seeming Christian* hath a *common Love of God* as he is *Good*, both in *himself*, and *unto the world*, and *unto him*. But this is not for his *Holiness*: and it is but a general ineffectual approbation and praise of God, which followeth a dead ineffectual belief: But his chiefest predominant love is always to his Carnal self, and the Love both of his soul, and of God is subjected to his *fleshly self-love*. His chiefest Love to God is for prospering him in the world, and such as is subservient to his sensuality, pride, covetousness, presumption and false hopes. *Luke* 18. 21, 22. 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 4. *Joh.* 12. 43. *Joh.* 5. 42.

VII. 1. A *Christian indeed* doth practically take this *Love* of *God* and the holy expressions of it, to be the very *life* and *top* of his Religion, and the very *life* and *beauty* and pleasure of his soul: He makes it his *work* in the world, and loveth himself (complacentially) but so far as he findeth in himself the Love of God: And so far as he findeth himself without it, he loatheth himself as an unlovely carkass: And so far as his *prayers* and *obedience* are without it, he looks on them but as unacceptable loathsome things. And therefore he is taken up in the study of *Redemption*, because he can no where so clearly see the *Love and Loveliness of God*, as in the *face* of a *Redeemer*, even in the

wonders of Love revealed in Christ. And he studieth them, that Love may kindle Love. And therefore he delighteth in the contemplating of Gods attributes and infinite perfections; and in the beholding of him in the frame of the Creation, and reading his name in the book of his works, that his soul may by such steps, be raised in Love and Admiration of his Maker: And as it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun or light, so is it to the mind of the *Christian indeed* to be frequently and seriously contemplating the nature and glory of God: And the exercise of Love in such contemplations, is most of his daily walk with God. And therefore it is also, that he is more taken up in the exercises of thanksgiving and the Praises of the Almighty, than in the lower parts of Godliness: so that though he neglect not confession of sin and *humiliation*, yet doth he use them but in subserviency to the *Love* and *Praise* of *God*: He doth but rid out the filth that is undecent in a Heart that is to entertain its God. He placeth not the chief part of his Religion in any outward duties, nor in any lower preparatory acts; Nor doth he stop in any of these, however he neglect them not. But he useth them all, to advance his soul in the *Love of God*: And useth them the more diligently, because the Love of God to which they conduce, as to their proper end, is so high and excellent a work. Therefore in *Davids* Psalms you find a heart delighting it self in the praises of God, and in Love with his *word* and *works* in order to his praises. *Psal.* 116. 1. *&c. Psal.* 106. *&* 103. *&* 145. *&* 146. *&c. Rom.* 8. 37.

2. The *weak Christian* is taken up but very

title; with the lively exercises of Love and Praise; nor with any Studies higher than his own distempered heart; The care of his poor soul; and the complaining of his manifold infirmities, and corruptions, is the most of his Religion: And if he set himself to the Praising of God or to Thanksgiving, he is as dull and short in it as if it were not his proper work. *Psal.* 77. *Mar.* 9. 24. *&* 16. 14.

3. The *seeming Christian liveth to the flesh*; and carnal self-love is the active principle of his life: and he is neither exercised in *Humiliation* or in *Praise sincerely*; being unacquainted both with *holy Joy* and *Sorrow*; But knowing that he is in the hands of God, to prosper or destroy him; he will humble himself to him to escape his judgements, and praise him with some gladness for the sunshine of prosperity; and he will seem to be piously thanking God when he is but rejoycing in the accommodations of his flesh, or strengthning his presumption and false hopes of heaven. *Luke* 18. 11. *&* 12. 19. *Isa.* 58. 2.

VIII. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that is so apprehensive of his lost condition, unworthyness and utter insufficiency for himself, and of the office, perfection and sufficiency *of Christ*, that he hath absolutely put his soul and all his hopes into the hands of Christ; and now liveth in him and upon him; as having no Life but what he hath from Christ, nor any other way of access to God, or acceptance of his person or his service but by him: In him he beholdeth and delightfully admireth the Love and goodness of the Father: In him he hath access with boldness unto God: Through him the most terrible avenging Judge is become a Reconciled God, and he that we could

not remember but with trembling, is become the most desirable object of our thoughts. He is delightfully employed in prying into the unsearchable mysteries; And Christ doth even *dwell in his heart by faith: and being rooted and grounded in love, he apprehendeth with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and knoweth the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*: Eph. 3. 17, 18, 19. He perceiveth that he is daily beholden to Christ, that he is not in hell, that sin doth not make him like to Devills, and that he is not utterly forsaken of God: He feeleth that he is beholden to Christ, for every hours time, and every mercy to his soul or body, and for all his hope of mercy in this life or in the life to come. He perceiveth that he is dead in himself, and that *his life is hid with Christ in God*. And therefore he is as *buryed and risen again with Christ*; even *dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ*. Rom. 6. 3, 4, 11. Col. 3. 3. He saith with *Paul*, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*. Thus doth he live as truly and constantly by the *second Adam* who is a *quickning spirit*, as he doth by the *first Adam* who was a *living soul*. 1 Cor. 15. 45. This is a *confirmed Christians* life.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he be also united unto Christ, and live by faith, yet how languid are the operations of that faith? How dark and dull are his thoughts of Christ? How little is his sense of the wonders of Gods love revealed to the world in the mysterie of Redemption? How little use doth he make of Christ?

And

And how little life receives he from him? And how little comfort findeth he in believing, in comparison of that which the confirmed find? He is to Christ as a sick person to his food; He only picketh here and there a little of the crums of the bread of life, to keep him from dying, but is wofully unacquainted with the powerfullest works of faith. He is such a Believer as is next to an unbeliever, and such a member of Christ, as is next to a meer stranger.

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, he may understand the letter of the Gospel, and number himself with Christs disciples, and be baptized with water, and have such a faith as is a meer opinion: But he hath not an effectual living faith, nor is baptized with the Holy Ghost, nor is his soul engaged absolutely and entirely in the covenant of Christianity to his Redeemer: He may have a handsome well-made image of Christianity, but it is the flesh and sense, and not Christ and faith, by which his life is actuated and ordered. *Joh.* 3. 6. *Rom.* 7. 25.

IX. 1. *A Christian indeed* doth firmly believe that Christ is a *Teacher sent from God* (Joh. 3. 2.) and that he came from Heaven to reveal his Fathers will, and to *bring life and immortality* more fully *to light by his Gospel*; and that if an *Angel* had been sent to tell us, of the life to come and the way thereto, he had not been so *credible* and *venerable* a messenger as the Son of God: And therefore he taketh *him alone* for his *chief Teacher*, and knoweth *no Master on Earth* but him, and such as he appointeth under him: His study in the world is to know a *crucified and glorified Christ, and God by him*, and he regardeth no other know-

ledge, not prefer any other studies, but this, and such as are subservient to this. Even when he studieth the *works* of *nature*, it is as by the conduct of the restorer of nature, and as one help appointed him by Christ, to lead him up to the knowledge of God. And therefore he perceiveth that *Christ is made of God unto us, wisdom* as well as *Righteousness*: And that Christianity is the true Philosophy: and that the *wisdom of the world*, which is only about worldly things, from worldly principles, to a worldly end, is foolishness with God: He taketh nothing for *wisdom* which tendeth not to acquaint him more with God, or lead him up to everlasting happiness. *Christ* is his *Teacher* (either by *natural* or *supernatural* revelation,) and *God* is his *ultimate end*, in all his studies, and all that he desireth to know in the world. He valueth *knowledge* according to its *usefulness*: And he knoweth that its chief use is to lead us to the love of God. *Matth.* 23. 8. 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. & 2. 2. &c. *Joh.* 1. 18. *Col.* 2. 3. *Eph.* 4. 13.

2. Though the *weak Christian* hath the same Master, yet alas how little doth he learn? and how oft is he hearkning to the teaching of the flesh? and how carnal, and common is much of his knowledge? How little doth he depend on Christ in his enquiries after the things of nature? And how apt is he to think almost as highly of the teaching of *Aristotle*, *Plato*, *Seneca*, or at least of some excellent preacher, as of Christs? and to forget that these are but his messengers and instruments, to convey unto us several parcells of that Truth, which is *his* and not *theirs*, and which (*naturally* or *supernaturally*) they received

ceived from him; and all these Candles were lighted by him who is the Sun? And how little doth this weak Christian refer his common knowledge to God? or use it for him? or to the furtherance of his own and others happiness? 1 Tim. 2. 4.

3. And the *seeming Christian* though materially he may be eminent for knowledge, yet is so far from resigning himself to the teachings of Christ, that he maketh even his knowledge of Christian Verities to be to him but a common carnal thing, while he knoweth it but in a common manner, and useth it to the service of the flesh, and never yet learned so much as to be a new creature, nor to love God as God above the world. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

X. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one whose *Repentance* hath been deep, and serious, and universal, and unchangeable: It hath gone to the very *roots* of sin, and to the bottom of the sore, and hath not left behind it any reigning unmortified sin; nor any prevalent love to fleshly pleasures: His *Repentance* did not only *disgrace* his sin, and cast some *reproachful words* against it, and use confessions to *excuse* him from mortification, and to *save its life*, and hide it from the mortal blow. Nor doth he only repent of his *open* sins, and those that are most censured by the beholders of his life: But he specially perceives the dangerous poyson of *Pride*, and *unbelief*, and *worldliness*, and the want of the *Love of God*, and all his outward and smaller sins, do serve to shew him the greater malignity of these, and these are the matter of his greatest lamentations. He taketh not up a profession of Religion with strong corruptions

ruptions secretly covered in his heart: But his Religion consisteth in the death of his corruptions, and the purifying of his heart; He doth not secretly cherish any sin as too sweet or too profitable to be utterly forsaken, nor overlook it as a small inconsiderable matter. But he feeleth sin to be his *enemy* and his *disease*, and as he desireth not *one* enemy, *one* sickness, *one* wound, *one* broken bone, *one* serpent in his bed, so he desireth not any *one sin* to be spared in his soul: But saith with *David*, Psal. 139. 23. *Search me O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting.* He liveth in no gross or scandalous sin: And his infirmities are comparatively few and small; so that if he were not a sharper accuser of himself, than the most observant spectators are (that are just) there would little be known by him that is culpable and matter of reproof. He *walketh in all the commandments and ordinances of God blameless* (as to any notable miscarriage) Luk. 1. 6. He is *blameless and harmless, as the son of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; among whom he shineth as a light in the world*, Phil 2. 15. The fear, and love, and obedience of God is the work and tenour of his life.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he hath no sin but what he is a hater of, and fain would be delivered from, yet alas how imperfect is his deliverance? and how weak is the hatred of his sin, and mixed with so much proneness to it, that his life is much blemished with the spots of his offences. Though his *unbelief*, and *pride*, and *worldliness* are not predominant in him, yet are they (or some

(and of them) still so strong, and fight so much against his *faith*, *holiness*, and *heavenliness*, that he can scarcely tell which hath the upper hand; nor can others that see the sailings of his life, discern whether the good or the evil be most prevalent. Though it be Heaven which he most seeketh, yet *Earth* is so much regarded by him, that his heavenlymindedness is greatly damped and suppressed by it. And though it be the way of Godliness and obedience which he walketh in, yet is it with so many stumblings and falls, if not deviations also, that maketh him oft a burthen to himself, a shame to his profession, and a snare or trouble to those about him. His heart is like an ill swept house, that hath many a sluttish corner in it. And his life is like a moth-eaten garment, which hath many a hole, which you may see if you bring it into the light. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3. & 6. 6, 7, 8. & 11. 18, 21, 22, &c.

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, his Repentance doth but cropp the branches, it goeth not to the root and heart of his sin: It leaveth his *fleshly* mind and interest in the dominion: It polisheth his life, but maketh him not a new creature. It casteth away those sins which the flesh can spare, and which bring more shame or loss or trouble with them, than worldly honour, gain or pleasure: But still he is a very worldling at the heart; and the sins which his fleshly pleasures and felicity consisteth in, he will hide by confessions and seeming oppositions, but never mortifie and forsake. As *Judas*, that while he followed Christ was yet a *thief* and a coveteous hypocrite. *Joh.* 12. 6. 1 *Tim.* 6. 10 11.

XI. 1. Hence it followeth that a *Christian indeed*

deed doth heartily love the *searching light*, that it may fully acquaint him with his sins: He is truly desirous to know the worst of himself: And therefore useth the word of God, as a candle to shew him what is in his heart; and bringeth himself willingly into the light: He loveth the most searching Books and Preachers; not only because they disclose the faults of other men, but his own: he is not one that so loveth his pleasant and profitable sins, as to fly the light, lest he should be forced to know them, and so to forsake them: But because he hateth them, and is resolved to forsake them, therefore he would know them. Job. 3. 19, 20, 21. Therefore he is not only *patient* under *Reproofs*, but *loveth* them, and is *thankful* to a *charitable* reprover; and maketh a good use even of *malicious* and *passionate* reproofs. Psal. 141. 5. 2 Sam. 16. 11. He saith as in Job 34. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me. If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* His hatred of the sin, and desire to be reformed, suffer not his heart by pride to rise up against the remedy, and reject reproof. Though he will not falsely confess his duty to be his sin, nor take the judgement of every selfish, passionate or ignorant reprover to be infallible, nor to be his rule; yet if a judicious impartial person do but *suspect* him of a fault, he is ready to suspect himself of it, unless he be certain that he is clear. He loveth him better that would save him from his sin, than him that would entice him to it: and taketh him for his best friend who dealeth freely with him, and is the greatest enemy to his faults: And a flatterer he taketh but for the most dangerous insinuating kind of foe.

2. But

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he hate his sin, and love reformation, and loveth the most searching Books and Preachers, and loveth a gentle kind of reproof, yet hath so much pride and selfishness remaining, that any reproof that seemeth *disgracefull* to him, goeth very hardly down with him: like a bitter medicine to a queasie stomack: If you reprove him *before others*, or if your reproof be not very carefully sugured and minced, so that it rather extenuate than aggravate his fault, he will be ready to cast it up into your face, and with retorsions to tell you of some faults of your own, or some way shew you how little he loveth it, and how little thanks he giveth you for it. If you will not let him alone with his infirmities, he will distaste you, if not fall out with you, and let you know by his smart and impatience, that you have touched him in the sore and galled place. He must be a man of very great skill in managing a reproof, that shall not somewhat provoke him to distaste.

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, this is *his condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and he loveth darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil.* He *cometh* not to *the light, lest his deeds should* be discovered and reproved, Joh. 3. 19, 20, 21. He liketh a searching Preacher for others, and loveth to hear their sins laid open, if it no way reflect upon himself. But for himself he liketh best a *General* or a *smoothing* Preacher; and he flyeth from a quick and searching ministry, lest he should be proved and convinced to be in a state of sin and misery. Guilt maketh him fear or hate a lively searching Preacher, even as the guilty prisoner hateth the Judge. He loveth no com-

pany

pany ſo well as that which thinketh highly of him, and applaudeth and commendeth him, and neither by their reproofes nor ſtricter lives, will trouble his conſcience with the remembrance of his ſin, or the knowledge of his miſery. He will take you for his enemy for telling him the truth, if you go about to convince him of his undone condition, and tell him of his beloved ſin: Sin is taken to be as himſelf; It is *He* that doth evil, and not only *ſin* that dwelleth in him: And therefore all that you ſay againſt his *ſin*, he taketh it as ſpoken againſt himſelf; and he will defend his ſin as he would defend himſelf: He will hear you till you come to touch himſelf, as the Jews did by *Stephen* Act. 7. 51, 54. when they heard him call them *ſtiffnecked reſiſters of God* and *perſecutors*, then they *were cut to the heart, and grind their teeth at him.* And as they did by *Paul* Act. 22. 21. *They gave audience to this word, and then lift up their voices and ſaid, away with ſuch a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he ſhould live.* Gal. 4. 16. Joh. 9. 40. Mat. 21. 45. The prieſts and *phariſees* would have laid hands on Chriſt, when *they perceived that he ſpake of them.* And *Ahab* hated *Michaiah*, becauſe he did *not prophecie good of him, but evil*, 1 King. 22. 8. Deſervedly do they periſh in their ſin and miſery, that hate him that would deliver them, and refuſe the remedy. Prov. 12. 1. *Whoſo loveth inſtruction loveth knowledge, but he that hateth reproof is brutiſh.* Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reproved hardneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.*

XII. 1. A *Chriſtian indeed*, is one that unfeignedly *deſireth* to attain to the *higheſt degree of holineſs*, and to be *perfectly* freed from every thing that

that is sin. He *desireth perfection*, though not with perfect *desire*. He sitteth not down contentedly in any low degree of grace. He looketh on the holiest (how poor soever) with much more reverence and esteem than on the most rich and honourable in the world. And he had far rather be one of the most holy, than one of the most prosperous and great: He had rather be a *Paul* or *Timothy*, than a *Cæsar* or an *Alexander*. He complaineth of nothing with so much sorrow, as that he can *Know* and *Love* his God no more! How happy an exchange would he count it, if he had more of the Knowledge and Love of God, though he lost all his wealth and honour in the world. His smallest sins are a greater burden to him, than his greatest corporal wants and sufferings. As *Paul*, who because he could not perfectly fulfill Gods Law, and be as good as he *would be*, crieth out in *bondage*, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Rom. 7. 24.

2. And for the *weak Christian*, though he is habitually and resolvedly of the same mind, yet alas his desires after perfection are much more languid in him: And he hath too much patience and reconciledness to some of his sins, and sometimes taketh them to be sweet: So that his enmity to his Pride, or Coveteousness, or passion is much abated, and suffereth his sin to waste his grace and wound his conscience, and hinder much of his communion with God. He seeth not the odiousness of sin, nor the beauty of Holiness with so clear a sight as the confirmed Christian doth. He hateth sin more for the *ill effects* of it, than for its malignant hateful *nature*. He seeth not *clearly* the intrinsick evil that is in sin, which maketh

it

it deserve the pains of hell. Nor doth he discern the difference between a holy and an unholy soul so clearly as the stronger Christian doth. 1 Cor. 2, 3: Heb. 12. 1.

3. And as for the *seeming Christian*, though he may approve of perfect *holiness* in another, and may wish for it himself, when he thinketh of it but in the general, and not as it is exclusive and destructive of his beloved sin; yet when it comes to *particulars* he cannot away with it: He is so far from *desiring* it, that he will *not endure it*. The name of *holiness* he liketh; and that preservation from Hell which is the consequent of it: But when he understandeth what it is, he hath no mind of it. That holiness which should cure his *ambition* and *pride*, and make him contented with a low condition, he doth not like: He loveth not that holiness, which would deprive him of his *covetousness*, his *intemperance* in pleasant *meats* and *drinks*, his fleshly *lusts*, and inordinate *pleasures*. Nor doth he desire that holiness should employ his soul in the Love of God, and in daily prayer and meditating on his word, and raise him to a heavenly life on earth.

XIII. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that maketh God and Heaven the *End*, *Reward* and *Motive* of his Life: And liveth not in the world for any thing in the world, but for that endless happiness which the next world only can afford. The Reasons which actuate his thoughts, and choice, and all his life, are fetcht from Heaven. The interest of God and his soul as to eternity, is the ruling interest in him. As a traveller goeth all the way, and beareth all the difficulties of it, for the sake of the End or Place that he is going to: (how

ever

he may talk of many other matters by the way:) so is it with a Christian: he knoweth nothing worthy of his life and labours, but that which he hopeth for hereafter. This world is too sinful, and too vile, and short, to be his felicity. His very trade and work in the world is to lay up a treasure in heaven, Mat. 6. 20. *and to lay up a good foundation against the time to come, and to lay hold on eternal life:* 1 Tim. 6. 19. And therefore his very *heart* is there *Mat.* 6. 21. and he is employed in *seeking* and *setting his affections on the things above* Col. 3. 1. 2, 3. And his *conversation* and trade is in Heaven *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. *He looketh not at the things which are seen* which *are temporal*, but *at the things which are not seen* which are *eternal* 2 Cor. 4. 18. He is a stranger upon earth, and Heaven is to him as his home.

2. The weak Christian also hath the same *End* and *Hope* and *Motive*, and preferreth his hopes of the life to come before all the wealth and pleasures of this life: But yet his thoughts of Heaven are much more *strange* and *dull*: He hath so much doubting and fear yet mixed with his *faith* and *hope*, that he looketh before him to his everlasting state, with backwardness and trouble, and with small desire and delight: He hath *so much hope* of Heaven, as to abate his fears of hell, and make him think of eternity with more *quietness*, than he could do if he found himself unregenerate: But not so much as to make his thoughts of Heaven so free and sweet and *frequent*, nor his desires after it so strong, as the *confirmed Christians* are. And therefore his duties and his speech of Heaven, and his endeavours to obtain it, are all more languid and unconstant: And he is much

prone to fall in love with earth, and to entertain the motions of reconciliation to the world, and to have his heart too much set upon some place, or person or thing below, and to be either delighted too much in the poſſeſſion of it, or afflicted and troubled too much with the loſs of it. Earthly things are too much the *Motives* of his life, and the reaſons of his *joyes* and *griefs*: Though he hath the *true* belief of a life to come, and it prevaileth in the main againſt the world, yet it is but little that he *uſeth it* to the commanding and raiſing and comforting his ſoul, in compariſon of what a ſtrong believer doth: *Mat.* 16. 22, 23.

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* would ſerve God and *Mammon*, and placeth his chief and certaineſt happineſs *practically* upon *earth*: Though *ſpeculatively* he know and ſay that Heaven is better, yet doth he not *practically* judge it to be ſo *to him*: And therefore he loveth the world above it, and he doth moſt carefully *lay up a treaſure on earth*: Mat. 6. 19. and is reſolved firſt to ſeek and ſecure his portion here below; and yet he taketh Heaven for a reſerve, as knowing that the world will caſt him off at laſt, and dye he muſt, there is no remedy; and therefore he taketh heaven as *next* unto the beſt; as his *ſecond* hope, as better than hell; and will go in Religion as far as he can, without *the loſs* of his proſperity here: ſo that *earth* and *fleſh* do govern and command the deſign and tenor of his life; But heaven and his ſoul ſhall have all that *they can* ſpare; which may be enough to make him paſs with men for eminently religious. 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *Mat.* 13. 22. *Luke* 18. 22, 23. *Luk.* 14. 24, 33. *Pſ.* 17. 14. *Phil.* 3. 18, 19, 20.

XIV. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that having taken heaven for his felicity doth *account no labour or cost too great for the obtaining of it*: he hath nothing so dear to him in this world, which he cannot spare and part with for God and the world to come. He doth not only notionally know that nothing should seem too dear or hard for the saving of our salvation; but he knoweth this practically and is resolved accordingly. Though difficulties may hinder him in particular acts, and his executions come not up to the height of his desires (*Rom.* 7. 16, 17. &c.) yet he is resolved that he will never break on terms with Christ: There is no duty so hard which he is not willing and resolved to perform: and no sin so sweet or gainful which he is not willing to forsake: He knoweth how unprofitable a bargain he makes, who winneth the world, and loseth his own soul; and that no gain can ransome his soul, or recompence him for the loss of his salvation. *Mar.* 8. 36. He knoweth that it is impossible to be a loser by God; or to purchase heaven at too dear a rate: he knoweth that whatsoever it cost him, heaven will fully pay for all: and that it is the worldlings labour, and not the saints, that is repented of at last. He marvelleth more at distracted sinners, for making such a stir for wealth and honours and command, than they marvail at him for making so much a-doe for heaven. He knoweth that this world may be too dear bought, but so cannot his salvation: yea he knoweth that even our *duty* it self, is not our smallest priviledge and mercy: And that the more we do for God, the more we receive, and the greater is our gain and honour: and that the suf-

ferings of believers for righteouſneſs ſake, do not only prognoſticate their joyes in heaven, but occaſion here the greateſt joyes, that any ſhort of heaven partake of: *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, &c. He is not one that deſireth the *end* without the *means*, and would be *ſaved* ſo it may be on cheap and eaſie terms: But he abſolutely yieldeth to the terms of Chriſt, and ſaith with *Auſtin*, *Da quod jubes, & jube quod vis*; *Cauſe me to do what thou commandeſt, and command what thou will.* Though *Pelagius* contradicted the firſt ſentence, and the *ſtoik* the ſecond, yet *Auguſtine* owned both: and ſo doth every true believer. He greatly complaineth of his backwardneſs to obey, but never complaineth of the ſtrictneſs of the command. He loveth the *holineſs*, *juſtneſs* and *goodneſs* of the Laws, when he bewaileth the unholineſs and badneſs of his heart: He deſireth not God to command him leſs, but deſireth grace and ability to do more. He is ſo far from the mind of the ungodly world, who cry out againſt too much holineſs and making ſo much ado for heaven, that he deſireth even to reach to the degree of Angels, and would fain have *Gods will to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven*; and therefore the more deſireth to be in heaven, that he may do it better. *Pſal.* 119. 5. *Rom.* 7. 24.

2. The *weak Chriſtian* hath the *ſame eſtimation and reſolution*: But when it comes to practice, as his *will* is leſs confirmed and more corrupted and divided, ſo little impediments and difficulties are great temptations to him, and ſtop him more in the way of his obedience. All his duty is much more tedious to him, and all his ſufferings are much

more burthensome to him, than to *confirmed Christians*: And therefore he is easier tempted into omissions and impatiency, and walketh not so evenly, or comfortably with God. When the spirit is *willing*, it yieldeth oft to the weakness of the flesh, because it is *willing* in too remiss a degree. *Mat.* 26.41. *Gal.* 2. 14.

3. But the *seeming Christian* (though *notionally* and *generally* he may approve of strictness) yet secretly at the heart hath alwaies this reserve, that he will not serve God at too dear a rate. His worldly felicity he cannot part with, for all the hopes of the life to come: And yet he will not, he dare not renounce and give up those hopes: And therefore he maketh himself a Religion of the easiest and cheapest parts of Christianity, (among which sometimes the strictest opinions may fall out to be one part, so be it they be separated from the strictest practice:) And this easie cheap Religion he will needs believe to be true *Christianity* and *Godliness*; and so will hope to be saved upon these terms: And though he cannot but know that it is the certain character of a hypocrite, to have any thing nearer and dearer to his heart than God, yet he hopeth that it is not so with him, because his convinced judgement can say that *God is best* and the *world* is *vanity*, while yet his *heart* and affections so much contradict his opinion, as almost to say: *There is no God*: For his heart knoweth and loveth no God as God, that is, above his worldly happiness. He is resolved to do so much in religion as he findeth necessary to delude his conscience, and make himself believe that he is godly and shall be saved: but when he cometh to forsake all and take up

the Cross, and practise the costliest parts of duty, then you shall see that *Mammon* was better loved than God, and he will go away sorrowful, and hope to be saved upon easier terms. *Luke* 18. 23. For he was never resigned absolutely to God.

XV. 1. A *confirmed Christian* is one that taketh *selfdenial* for the one half of his Religion; and therefore hath bestowed one half of his endeavours to attain and exercise it. He knoweth that the fall of man, was a *turning to himself* from God; And that *selfishness* and want of *Love to God*, are the summ of all corruption and ungodliness; And that the *Love of God* and *selfdenial* are the summ of all religion; And that conversion is nothing but the turning of the heart from *carnal self* to God by Christ: And therefore on this hath his care and labour been so successfully laid out, that he hath truly and *practically* found out something that is much *better than himself*, and to be *loved and preferred* before *himself*; and which is to be his *chiefest ultimate end*. He maketh not *a God* of *himself* any more, but *useth himself* for *God*, to fulfill his will, as a creature of his own, that hath *no other end and use*. He no more preferreth himself above all the world, but esteemeth himself a poor and despicable part of the world: And highlier valueth the honour of God, and the welfare of the church, and the good of many, than any interest of his own. Though God in nature hath taught him to regard his *own felicity* and to *love himself*, and not to seek the glory of God, and the good of many souls in *opposition* to *his own*; yet hath he taught him to *prefer them* (though in conjunction) much *before his own*: For reason telleth him that man is nothing in comparison of *God*, and that we are made

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by him and for him; and that the welfare of the *Church* or publick societies is better (in order to the higheſt ends) than the welfare of ſome *one*. *Selfiſhneſs* in the unregenerate, is like an inflammation or appoſteme, which draweth the humours from other parts of the body to it ſelf: The intereſt of *God* and *man* are all ſwallowed up in the regard that men have to *ſelf-intereſt*: And the *Love* of *God* and *our neighbour* are turned into *ſelf-love*. But *ſelf* is as annihilated in the confirmed Chriſtian, ſo that it ruleth not his *Judgement*, his *affections*, or his *choice*: And he that lived in and to himſelf, as if God and all the world were but *for him*, doth now live to God, as one that is good for nothing elſe, and *findeth himſelf in ſeeking him* that is infinitely *above himſelf*. Luk. 14. 31, 32, 33. Phil. 2. 4, 21.

2. And the *weak Chriſtian* hath attained to ſo much *ſelfdenial* that *ſelf* is not predominant in him againſt the Love of God and his neighbour: But yet above all other ſins, too great a meaſure of *ſelfiſhneſs* ſtill remaineth in him: Theſe words [*own*, and *mine*, and *ſelf*] are too ſignificant with him: every thing of his, *own* is regarded inordinately, with partiality and too much *ſelfiſhneſs*. A word againſt *himſelf*, or an injury to *himſelf*, is more to him than worſe againſt his brother: He is too little mindfull of the glory of God, and of the publick good, and the ſouls of others; and even when he is mindful of his *own* ſoul, he is too regardleſs of the ſouls of many, that by prayer or exhortation or other means he ought to help: As a ſmall candle lighteth but a little way, and a ſmall fire heateth not farr off, ſo is his *Love* ſo much confined, that it reacheth not farr from him: He

valueth his friends too much upon their respect to please himself, and loveth men too much as they are partiall for him; and too little upon the pure account of grace, and their love to Christ and serviſableneſs to the Church: He eaſily overvalueth his own abilities, and is too confident of his *own* underſtanding, and apt to have too high conceits of any opinions that are his *own*; he is too apt to be tempted unto uncharitableneſs, againſt thoſe that croſs him in his *intereſt*, or *way*; he is apt to be too negligent in the work of God, when any *ſelfintereſt* doth ſtand againſt it; and too much to *ſeek* himſelf, his *own eſteem*, or his *own commodity*, when he ſhould devote himſelf to the good of ſouls, and give up himſelf to the work of God: Though he is not like the hypocrite that *preferreth himſelf* before the *will of God* and the common good, yet *ſelfiſhneſs* greatly ſtoppeth, interrupteth and hindreth him in Gods work; and any great *danger* or *loſs* or ſhame, or other concernment of his *own*, doth ſeem a greater matter to him, and oftner turn him out of the way, than it will with a confirmed Chriſtian: They were not all hypocrites that *Paul* ſpeaketh of in that ſad complaint, Phil. 2. 20, 21. *For I have no man like minded (to Timothy) who will naturally care for your ſtate, for all ſeek their own, not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts:*] that is; They *too much* ſeek their own, and not *entirely enough* the things that are Chriſts: which *Timothy* did *naturally*, as if he had been born to it, and Grace had made the Love of Chriſt and the ſouls of men and the good of others as *naturall* to him as the Love of himſelf. Alas how lowdly do their own diſtempers and ſoul miſcarriages, and the

divisions, and calamities of the Church, proclaim, that the weaker sort of Christians have yet too much *selfishness*, and that *self-denial* is lamentably imperfect in them.

3. But in the *seeming Christian selfishness* is still the predominant principle: he loveth God but for *himself*; and he never had any higher end than *self*: All his Religion, his opinions, his practice is animated by *self-love*, and governed by it, even by the Love of *carnal self*: *self-esteem*, *self-conceitedness*, *self-love*, *self-willedness*, *self-seeking* and *self-saving*, are the constitution of his heart and life. He will be of that opinion, and way and party in Religion, which *selfishness* directeth him to choose: He will go no *farther* in Religion, than *self-interest* and *safety* will allow him to go. He can change his friend, and turn his love into hatred, and his praises into reproach, when ever *self-interest* shall require it. He can make himself believe, and labour to make others believe, that the *wisest* and *holiest* servants of God, are *erroneous*, *humorous*, *hypocrites*, *and unsufferable*, if they do but stand cross to *his* opinions and interest. For he *judgeth* of them, and *loveth* or *hateth* them, principally as they *conform to his will* and *interest*, or as they are *against it*; As the godly measure all persons and things, by the *will* and *interest* of God, so do all ungodly men esteem them as they stand in reference to *themselves*. When their factious interest required it, the *Jews*, and specially the *Pharisees*, could make themselves and others believe, that the Son of God himself was a breaker of the Law, and an enemy to *Cæsar*, and a blasphemer, and unworthy to live on the earth: And that *Paul* was a pestilent fellow, and a mover

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of ſedition among the people, and a ringleader of a ſect, and a prophaner of the Temple, Act. 24. 5, 6. and which of the Prophets and Apoſtles did they not perſecute? Becauſe Chriſts doctrine doth croſs the intereſt of *ſelfiſh* men, therefore the world doth ſo generally riſe up againſt it with indignation; even as a Country will riſe againſt an invading enemy: For he cometh to take away that which is deareſt to them: As it is ſaid of *Luther*, that he medled with the Popes crown, and the Fryars bellies: and therefore no wonder if they ſwarmed all about his ears. *Selfiſhneſs* is ſo generall and deeply rooted, that (except with a few *ſelf-denying Saints*) *ſelf-love* and *ſelf-intereſt* ruleth the world: And if you would know how to pleaſe a graceleſs man, ſerve but his carnal intereſt, and you have done it: Be of his opinion, (or take on you to be ſo,) applaud him, admire him, flatter him, obey him, promote his preferment, honour and wealth, be againſt his enemies; in a word, make him your God, and ſell your ſoul to gain his favour, and ſo it's poſſible you may gain it.

XVI. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* hath ſo far mortified the *fleſh*, and brought all his *ſenſes and appetite into ſubjection to ſanctified Reaſon*, as that there is no great rebellion or perturbation in his mind; but a little matter, a holy thought, or a word from God, doth preſently rebuke and quiet his inordinate deſires: The *fleſh* is as a well-broken and well-ridden horſe, that goeth on his journey obediently and quietly, and not with ſtriving and chafing and vexatious reſiſting: Though ſtill *fleſh* will *be fleſh*, and will be *weak*, and will fight againſt the ſpirit, ſo that we cannot

not do all the good we would, (*Isa.* 5. 17. *Rom.* 7. 16, 17, *&c.*) yet in the confirmed Christian, it is so far tamed and subdued, that its rebellion is much less, and its resistance weaker, and more easily overcome: It causeth not any notable unevenness in his obedience, nor blemishes in his life: it is no other than consisteth with a readiness to obey the will of God. Gal. 5 24, 25. 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof: They run not as uncertainly: they fight not as one that beateth the air: but they keep under their bodies, and bring them into subjection, lest by any means they should be castaways: They put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof* Rom. 13. 13, 14. As we see to a *temperate man*, how sweet and easie temperance is, when to a glutton or drunkard, or riotous liver it is exceeding hard: so it is in all other points with a confirmed Christian. He hath so far crucified the flesh, that it is as *dead* to its former lusts, and so far mastered it, that it doth easily and quickly yield: And thus maketh the life of such a Christian, not only *pure*, but very *easie* to him, in comparison of other mens. Nay, more than this, he can use his *sense* (as he can use the world, the objects of sense) in subserviency to faith and his salvation. His eye doth but open a window to his mind to hold and admire the Creator in his work: His *taste* of the *sweetness* of the creatures is but a *means*, by which the sweeter Love of God doth pass directly to his heart: His sense of *pleasure* is but the passage of spiritual holy pleasure to his mind: His sense of bitterness and pain is but

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the meſſenger to tell his heart, of the bitterneſs and vexatiouſneſs of ſin. As God in the creation of us, made our ſenſes, but as the inlet and paſſage for himſelf into our minds, (even as he made all the *creatures* to repreſent him to us by this paſſage;) ſo grace doth reſtore our very ſenſes (with the creature) to this their holy original uſe: that the goodneſs of God through the goodneſs of the creature, may paſs to our hearts, and be the effect and end of all.

2. But, for the *weak Chriſtian*, though he have *mortified the deeds of the body by the ſpirit*, and *live not after the fleſh* but be freed from its captivity or *reign* (Gal. 5. 24. Rom. 8. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.) yet hath he ſuch remnants of concupiſcence and ſenſuality, as make it a far harder matter to him to live in temperance, and deny his appetite, and govern his ſenſes; and reſtrain them from rebellion, and exceſs: He is like a weak man upon an ill-ridden headſtrong horſe, who hath much ado to keep his ſaddle and keep his way. He is ſtronglier inclined to fleſhly luſts, or exceſs in meat, or drink, or ſleep, or ſports, or ſome ſuch fleſhly pleaſure, than the mortified temperate perſon is, and therefore is ofter guilty of ſome exceſs: ſo that his life is a very tireſome conflict, and very uneaſie to himſelf: becauſe the leſs the fleſh is mortified, the more able it is to raiſe perturbations, and to put *faith* and *reaſon* to a continual fight. And moſt of the ſcandals and blemiſhes of his life ariſe from hence; even the ſucceſſes of the fleſh againſt the ſpirit; ſo that (though he live not in any groſs or wilful ſins; yet) in leſſer meaſures of exceſs he is too frequently overtaken: How few be there that in

meat

eat and *sleep* do not usually exceed their measure? And they are easily tempted to libertine opinions, which indulge the flesh, having a weaker preservative against them than stronger Christians have. *Mat.* 16. 22, 23. *Gal.* 5. 13. & 1. 16. & 2. 12, 13, 14. *Col.* 2. 11.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is really carnal. The *flesh* is the predominant part with him; and the *interest* of the flesh is the ruling interest. He washeth away the outward filth, and in hope of salvation, will be as religious as the *flesh* will give him leave; and will deny it in some smaller matters; and will serve it in a religious way, and not in so gross and impudent a manner as the Atheists and openly profane. But for all that he never conquered the flesh indeed; but seeketh its prosperity more than the pleasing of God and his salvation: And among prayers and sermons and holy conference and books, yea and formal *fastings* too, he is serving the *flesh*, with so much the more dangerous impenitencie, by how much the more his cloak of formality hindereth him from the discerning of his sin: many a one that is of unblemished reputation in Religion, doth constantly serve his appetite in meat and drink, (though without any notable excess,) and his fleshly mind in the pleasure of his dwelling, wealth and accommodations, as much as some profane ones do, if not much more. And whenever it cometh to a parting trial, they will shew that the flesh was the ruling part, and will venture their souls to secure its interest. *Luke* 18. 23. & 14. 33, *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 9, 13. *Mat.* 13. 21, 22. *Jud.* 19.

XVII. 1. Hence it followeth that a *Christian indeed*

indeed preferreth the means of his ſpiritual benefit and ſalvation incomparably before all corporal commodities and pleaſures. He had rather dwell under the teaching and guidance of an able experienced Paſtor, though it be croſs to his proſperity and worldly gain, than to live under an ignorant or dead hearted Preacher, when it further-eth his trading or more accommodateth his fleſh. (Though yet he muſt not remove when God layeth any reſtraint upon him, by his duty to his family, or others:) He had rather if he be a ſervant, dwell in a family, where he may do or receive moſt ſpiritual good, than in a carnal family, where he may have more eaſe, and better fare, and greater wages. If he be to marry, he had rather have one that hath wiſdom and piety without wealth, than one that hath riches without wiſdom and piety. He is gladder of an opportunity (in publick or private) for the profit of his ſoul, than of a feaſt, or a good bargain, or an opportunity for ſome gain in worldly things. *Mat.* 6. 20. 33.

2. And the *weak Chriſtian* is of the ſame mind in the main. He valueth mercies and helps for his ſoul, above thoſe for his body: But it is with leſs zeal, and more indifferency; and therefore is more eaſily and oftner drawn to the omitting of ſpiritual duties, and neglect of ſpiritual helps and mercies: and goeth to them with more auerſneſs, and as driven by neceſſity: and is much leſs ſenſible of his loſs, when he miſſeth of any ſuch ſpiritual helps. *Luk.* 10. 41, 42. *Heb.* 10. 25. *Act.* 2. 42. & 4. 32.

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* being a *real worldling*, doth ſerve God and Mammon; and Mam-

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tion with the *first* and *best*: He had rather miss a sermon, than a good bargain or commodity: he had rather dwell where he may thrive best, or have most ease and pleasure, than where he may find the greatest helps for heaven: he will be Religious, but it must be with an easie and a pleasant and merry Religion; which may not be too nigardly with his flesh, nor use it too strictly, unless when one days austerity may procure him an indulgence for his liberty all the week following. He will make his bargain with Christ so, as to be sure that he may not lose by him: And he will not believe that God is pleased with that which is much displeasing to his flesh. *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13. *Mat.* 13. 21, 22.

XVIII. 1. The *Christian indeed* is one that is *crucified to the world*, and the *world* is as a *crucified* thing to him: *Gal.* 6. 14. He hath *overcome the world* by faith, and followeth Christ in the pursuit of it, to a perfect conquest. 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. *Joh.* 16. 33. He hath seen through all its gloring vanity, and *foreseen* what it will prove at last: He hath found that it cannot quiet conscience, nor reconcile the guilty soul to God, nor save it from his consuming wrath; nor serve instead of God or Heaven, of Christ or grace; but will cast off its servants in their last extremity; naked and desolate into remediless despair: And therefore he is resolvedly at a point with all things under the Sun: Let them take the world for their portion and felicity that will: For his part, he accounteth all things in it *dung* and *dross* in comparison of Christ and things eternal, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 19, 20. All the preferments, and honours, and command, and wealth, and greatness of the world, do not

seem

ſeem to him a bate conſiderable, to make a wiſe man once queſtion whether he ſhould perſevere in faithfulneſs to God, or to tempt him to commit one wilful ſin: He would not ſpeak, or own a lie, or approve the ſin of any other, for all that worldlings enjoy in their greateſt proſperity while they live. He accounteth his peace with God and conſcience, and his communion with Chriſt in the greateſt povertie, to be incomparably better than all the pleaſures and commodities of ſin: yea the very reproach of Chriſt is better to him than all the treaſures of Court or Countrey, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. Grace hath mortified and annihilated the world to him: And that which is *dead* and *nothing* can *do nothing* with him againſt God and his ſoul. He looketh on it as a carrion, which dogs may love and fight for; but is unfit to be the food of man: He is going to the land of promiſe; and therefore will not contend for an inheritance in this howling wilderneſs. Whether he be high or low, rich or poor, are ſo ſmall a part of his concernments, that he is almoſt indifferent to them, farther than as the intereſt of God and ſouls, may accidentally be concerned in them. The *world* ſet againſt God and Heaven and holineſs, doth weigh no more in his eſtimation, than a feather that is put in the ballance againſt a mountain or all the world. He feeleth no great force in ſuch temptations, as would draw him to win the world and loſe his ſoul. His eye and heart are, where his God and treaſure is, above; and worldly wealth and greatneſs are below him, even under his feet: He thinketh not things temporal worth the *looking* at, in compariſon of things eternal, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. He

thinketh

maketh that their money and riches do deservedly perish with them, who think all the money in the world, to be a thing comparable with grace! Act. 8. 20.

2. And the *weak Christian* is of the same judgement and resolution in the main: But yet the world retaineth a greater interest in his heart: It grieveth him more to lose it: It is a stronger temptation to him: To deny all the preferments and honours and riches of it, seemeth a *greater matter* to him: and he doth it with more striving and less ease: and sometimes the respect of worldly things prevaileth with him in lesser matters, to wound his conscience, and maketh work for repentance; and such are so entangled in worldly cares, and prosperity tasteth so sweet with them, that grace even languisheth and falleth into a consumption, and almost into a swoun. So much do some such let out their hearts, to the world which they renounced, and scrape for it with so much care and eagerness, and contend with others about their commodities and rights, that they seem to the standers by to be as worldly as worldlings themselves are; and become a shame to their profession, and make ungodly persons say, *Your godly professors are as coveteous as any*, 2 Tim. 4. 10.

3. But *seeming Christians* are the servants of the world: when they have learnt to speak hardliest of it, it hath their hearts: Heaven (as I said before) is valued but as a *reserve*, when they know they can keep the world no longer. They have more sweet and pleasing thoughts and speeches of the world, than they have of God and the world to come: It hath most of their

hearts, when God is most preferred by their tongues: there it is that they are daily laying up their treasure, and there they must leave it at the parting hour, when they go naked out as they came naked in: the love of deceitful riches choaketh the word of God, and it withereth in them, and becometh unfruitful, *Mat.* 13. 22. They go away sorrowful because of their beloved riches, when they should part with all for the hopes of heaven. *Luk.* 18. 23. yea though they are beggars that never have a dayes prosperity in the world, for all that, they love it better than heaven, and *desire* that which they *cannot get*: because they have not an eye of faith, to see that better world which they neglect, and therefore take it for an uncertain thing: nor are their carnal natures suitable to it, and therefore they mind it not. *Rom.* 8. 7. When an Hypocrite is at the best, he is but a Religious worldling: The world is nearer to his heart than God is, but *pure Religion keepeth a man unspotted of the world*: *Jam.* 1. 27.

VOL. IX. 1. A *confirmed Christian* is one, that still *seeth the end* in all that he doth, and that is before him in his *way*: and looketh not at things as at the *present* they seem or relish to the flesh, or to short sighted men; but as they *will appear* and be judged of *at last*. The *first letter* maketh not the *word*, nor the *first word* the *sentence*, without the *last*. *Present time* is quickly past; and therefore he less regardeth what things seem at present, than what they will prove to all eternity. When temptations offer him a bate to sin, with the *present profit*, or pleasure, or honour, he seeth at once the *whole stream*: he seeth all worldly things as they are seen by a dying man;

and as after the general conflagration they will be. He seeth the godly in his adversity and patience; as entring into his masters joys: he seeth the dutifull vilified saint, as ready to stand justified by Christ at his right hand; and the eyes of the malicious world, as ready to cover themselves with shame: he seeth the wicked in the height of their prosperity as ready to be cut down and withered, and their pampered flesh to turn to dirt; and their filthy and malicious souls, to stand condemned by Christ at his left hand, and to hear, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Mat. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 24. Jam. 1. 10, 11. Psal. 73. & 37. Therefore it is that he valueth grace, because he knoweth what it *will be*: and therefore it is that he flieth from sin, because he *knoweth the terrors of the Lord*, and what it will prove to the sinner in the *end*; and how sinners themselves will curse the day that ever they did commit it; and wish when it is too late, that they had chosen the holiness and patience of the saints: and therefore it is that he *pitieth* rather than *envieth* the prosperous enemies of the Church; because he foreseeth what the *end will be of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ; and if the righteous be scarcely saved; where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9, 10. If the wicked unbelievers saw but the *ending* of all things as he doth, they would be all then of his mind and way. This putteth so much life into his prayers, his obedience and patience, because he seeth the end in all. *Deut.* 32. 29. *Prov.* 19. 20. *Isai.* 47. 7. 2. And the *weakest Christian* doth the same in the main, so far as to turn his heart from things temporal, to things eternal; and to resolve him

in his main choice, and to conduct the course of his life towards heaven. But yet in particular actions he is often stopt in present things, and forgetfully loseth the sight of the end, and so is deluded and entised into sin, for want of seeing that which should have preserved him: he is like one that travelleth over hills and vallies, who when he is upon the hills doth see the place that he is going to, but when he cometh into the vallies, it is out of his sight. Too oft doth the weak Christian think of things as they appear at the present, with little sense of the change that is neer: when he seeth the bates of sin, whether riches, or beauty, or meat and drink, or any thing that is pleasing to the senses, the remembrance of the *end* doth not so *quickly* and *powerfully* work, to prevent his deceived imaginations, as it ought. And when poverty, or shame, or sufferings, or sickness, are presented to him, the foresight of the *end* is not so *speedy* and *powerful* in clearing his judgement, and setling his resolution, and preventing his misapprehension and trouble as it ought. And hence come his oft mistakes and falls: and herein consisteth much of that *foolishness*, which he confesseth when Repentance bringeth him to himself. 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9.

3. But the *seeming Christian* hath so dim and doubtful a fore-sight of the end, and it is so seldom out of his mind, that *things present* do carry away his heart, and have the greatest power and interest with him, and are most regarded and sought after in this life. For he is purblind, not seeing a far off, as it is said, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. He wanteth that *faith* which is the *substance of things hoped*

hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen Heb. 11. 1. Things promised in another world, seem to him too uncertain or too farr off, to be preferred before the happiness of this world: he is resolved to make his best of that which he hath in hand, and to prefer possession before such hopes. Little doth his heart perceive what a change is neer, and how the face of all things will be altered! How sin will look, and how the minds of sinners will be changed, and what all the riches, and pleasures, and honours of the world will appear at the latter end! He foreseeth not the day when the slothful, and the worldly, and the fleshly, and the proud, and the enemies of godliness shall all wish in vain, O that we had laid up our treasure in heaven, and laboured for the food that perisheth not, and had set less by all the vanities of the world! and had imitated the holiest and most mortified believers! Though the hypocrite can himself foretell all this, and talk of it to others, yet his belief of it is so dead, and his sensuality so strong, that he liveth by *sense*, and not by that *belief*, and *present things* are practically preferred by him, and bear the sway, so that he needeth those warnings of God, as well as the profane, Deut. 32. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, and that they would consider their latter end.* And he is one of the *foolish* ones, Mat. 25. 8, 11. who are seeking oyl for their lamps when it is too late, and are crying out, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, when the door is shut; and will not know the time of their visitation, nor know effectually in this their day the things which belong to their everlasting peace.

XX. 1. The *Christian indeed* is one that *liveth*

upon God alone. His faith is Divine: his love and obedience and confidence are Divine: his chiefest converse is Divine: his hopes and comforts are Divine! As it is God that he dependeth on, and trusteth to, and studieth to please above all the world, so it is *Gods approbation* that he taketh up with for his justification and reward: He took him for his absolute Governour, and judge, and full *felicity*, in the day when he took him for his *God*. He can live in peace without mans approbation: If men are never acquainted with his sincerity, or vertues, or good deeds, it doth not discourage him nor hinder him from his holy course: he is therefore the same in secret as in publick; because no place is secret from God. If men turn his greatest vertues or duties to his reproach, and slander him, and make him odious to men; and represent him as they did *Paul*, a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and the ringleader of a sect, and make him as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, this changeth him not, for it changeth not his felicity, nor doth he miss of his reward. 1 *Cor.* 4. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Read the words in the text: Though he hath so much suspition of his own understanding, and reverence for wiser men, that he will be glad to learn, and will hear reason from any one; yet *praise* and *dispraise* are matters of very small regard with him, and, as to himself, he accounteth it but a small thing to be judged of men, whether they justifie or condemn him; because they are fallible and have not the power of determining any thing, to his great commodity or detriment, nor is it their judgement to, which he stands or falls: 1 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

he hath a more dreadful or comfortable judgement to prepare for; man is of small account with him in compatison of God. *Rom.* 8. 33, 34, 35, 36.

2. And though with the *weakest true Christian* it is so also as to the *predominancie* of Gods esteem and interest in him, yet is his weakness daily visible in the culpable effects. Though God have the chiefest place in his esteem, yet man hath much more than his due. The thoughts and words of men seem to such, of far greater importance than they should. Praise and dispraise, favours and injuries, are things which affect their hearts too much: they bear not the contempts and wrongs of men, with so quiet and satisfied a mind, as beseemeth those that live upon God. They have so small experience of the comforts of God in Christ, that they are tasting the deeper of other delights, and spare them not so easily as they ought to do: God, without friends or house, or land, or maintenance or esteem in the world, doth not fully quiet them, but there is a deal of pievish impatience left in their minds, though it doth not drive them away from God.

3. But the *seeming Christian* can better take up with the *world alone* than with *God alone*: God is not so much missed by him as the world: He alwayes breaks with Christ when it cometh to *forsaking all*: He is *godly notionally* and *professedly*, and therefore may easily *say* that *God is his portion*, and *enough for those that put their trust in him*: But his *heart* never consented truly to reduce these words to practise. When it comes to the trial, the praise or dispraise of man, and the prosperity or matters of the world, do signifie more with him than the favour or displeasure of God; and can do more with

him. Christ and riches and esteem he could be content with; but he cannot away with a naked Christ alone. Therefore he is indeed a practical Atheist, even when he seemeth most religious: For if he had ever taken *God* for *his God* indeed, he had certainly taken him as his portion, felicity, and all; and therefore as enough for him without the creature. (*Luk.* 18. 23.

XI. 1. For all this it followeth that *A Christian indeed hath with himself devoted all that he hath to God*, and so all that he hath is *sanctified*: he is only in doubt oft times in *particular cases*, *what God would* have him do with himself, and his estate; but never in doubt whether they are to be *wholly* employed *for God*, in obedience to his will, so far as he can know it: and therefore doth *estimate every creature and condition, purely as it relateth unto God and life eternal.* HOLINES TO THE LORD is written upon all that he *hath* and *doth*: he taketh it as *sent from God*, and useth it as his Masters *goods* and talents, not chiefly for himself, but for his Masters ends and will: God appeareth to him in the creature, and is the life, and sweetness, and glory of the creature to him: his first question in every business he undertaketh, or every place or condition that he chooseth is, how it conduceth to the Pleasing of God, and to his spiritual ends: *Whether he eateth or drinketh or what ever he doth, he doth all to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. 10. 31. The posie engraven on his heart is the name of GOD, with [OF HIM, and THROUGH HIM, and TO HIM ARE ALL THINGS; TO HIM BE GLORY FOR EVER, AMEN.] *Rom.* 11. 36.

He

he liveth as a steward, that useth not his *own*, though yet he have a sufficient reward for his fidelity: and he keepeth accounts both of his receivings and layings out; and reckoneth all to be worse than lost, which he findeth not expended on his Lords account. For himself he asketh not that which is sweetest to the flesh, but that which is fittest to his *end* and *work*. And therefore desireth not *Riches* (for himself) but *his daily bread*, and *food convenient for him*; and *having food* and *rayment is therewith content*, having taken *godliness* for his gain: he asketh not for superfluity, nor for any thing to consume *it on his lusts*, nor to become *provision for his flesh, to satisfie the wills thereof*: But as a runner in his race, desireth not any provisions which may hinder him: and therefore *forgetting the things which are behind* (the world which he hath turn'd his back upon) *he reacheth forth to the things which are before* (the crown of glory) *and presseth toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*: not turning an eye to any thing that would stop him in his course. Thus while he is employed about things below, his mind and conversation is heavenly and divine, while all things are estimated and *used* purely for *God* and *Heaven*. Luk. 16. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Tit. 1. 15. Prov. 30. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 6. Jam. 4. 3. Rom. 13. 14. Phil. 3. 13, 14, 15.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he have all this in *desire*, and be thus *affected* and *resolved* in the *main*, and liveth to God in the scope and course of his life; yet is too often looking aside, and valuing the creature carnally for it self; and oft-times useth it for the pleasing of the flesh,

and

and almost like a common man; his house, and land, and friends, and pleasures, are relished too *carnally*, as his own accommodations; and though he walk not after the *flesh* but after the spirit, yet he hath too much of the fleshly taste, and is greatly out in his accounts with God; and turneth many a thing from his masters use, to the service of the flesh; and though he be not as the slothfull wicked servant, yet is it but little improvement that he maketh of his talent. *Mat.* 25. 17, 26, 27, 28.

3. But the *seeming Christian* being *carnal* and *selfish*, while his *notions* and *professions* are *spiritual* and *divine*, and his *selfish* and *fleshly interest* being predominant; it must needs follow that he *esteemeth* all things principally as they respect his fleshly interest, and useth them principally for his carnal self; even when in the *manner* he seemeth to use them most religiously (as I have said before.) And so to the *defiled nothing is pure*, Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13. Tit. 1. 15.

XXII. 1. *A Christian indeed* hath a *promptitude to obey*, and a *ready compliance of his will to the will of God*. He hath not any great averseness and withdrawing, and doth not the good which he doth with much backwardness and striving against it: but as in a well ordered watch or clock, the spring or poise do easily set all the wheels a going, and the first wheel easily moveth the rest; so is the *will* of a confirmed Christian *presently moved*, as soon as he knoweth the will of God. He stayeth not for other moving Reasons: *Gods will* is his Reason. This is the *Habit* of subjection and obedience: which makes him say, *speak Lord for thy servant heareth*: and

Lord

Lord what wouldst thou have me do. And *Teach me to do thy will O God:* Psal. 143. 10. 1 Sam. 9. 10. Act. 9. 6. *I delight to do thy will O God; yea thy Law is within my heart:* Psal. 40. 8. *The Law written in our heart*, is nothing else but the *knowledge* of Gods Laws, with this *Habit* or *propensitude* to obey them; the special fruit of the spirit of grace.

2. But a *weak Christian*, though he love Gods will and way, and be *sincerely obedient* to him, yet in *many particulars* where his corruption contradicteth, hath a great deal of *backwardness* and *striving* of the *flesh* against the *spirit*; and there needs many words and many considerations, and vehement perswasions, yea and sharp afflictions sometimes to bring him to obey: and he is fain to *drive on* his backward heart, and hath frequent use for the *rod* and *spurr*; and therefore is more slow and uneven in his obedience, *Gal.* 5. 17.

3. The *seeming Christian* is forward in those calie cheaper parts of duty, which serve to delude his carnal heart, and quiet him in a worldly life; but he is so backward to *through sincere obedience* in the most *flesh-displeasing parts* of duty, that he is never brought to it at all; but either he will fit his opinions in religion to his will, and will not believe them to be duties, or else he will do something like them in a superficial formal way, but the thing it self he will not do. For he is more obedient to his carnal mind and lusts, than he is to God, *Rom.* 8. 6, 7. And forwarder much to sacrifice than obedience, *Eccl.* 5. 1.

XXIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* doth daily *delight himself in God*, and findeth more solid content and pleasure in his *commands* and *promises*, than

in

in all this world. His *duties* are ſweet to him, and his *hopes* are ſweeter. Religion is not a tireſome task to him. The yoak of Chriſt is eaſie to him, and his burthen light, and his commandments are not grievous, *Pſal.* 37. 4. & 1. 2. & 40. 8. & 94. 19. & 119. 16. 35. 47. 70. *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. *Joh.* 5. 3. That which others take as Phyſick, for meer neceſſity, againſt their wills, he goeth to as a feaſt, with appetite and delight. He prayeth becauſe he *loveth* to pray; and he thinks and ſpeaks of holy things, becauſe he *loveth* to do it. And hence it is that he is ſo much in holy duties, and ſo unwearied, becauſe he *loveth* it, and taketh pleaſure in it. As voluptuous perſons are oft, and long at their ſports, or merry company, becauſe they *love* them, and take pleaſure in them: ſo are ſuch Chriſtians oft, and long in holy exerciſes becauſe their hearts are ſet upon them, as their recreation and the way and means of their felicity. If it be a *delight* to a *ſtudious* man, to read thoſe books which moſt clearly open the abſtruſeſt myſteries of the ſciences; or to converſe with the moſt wiſe and learned men, and if it be a delight to men, to converſe with their deareſt friends, or to hear from them and read their letters; no marvel if it be a delight to a *Chriſtian indeed* to read the Goſpel myſteries of Love, and to find there the promiſes of everlaſting happineſs, and to ſee in the face of Jeſus Chriſt the cleareſt Image of the eternal deity, and foreſee the Joyes which he ſhall have for ever. He ſticketh not in ſuperficial formalities, but breaking the ſhell doth feed upon the kernell: It is not bare external duty which he is taken up with; nor any meer creature that is his

content: but it is *God* in *creatures* and *ordinances* that he ſeeketh and liveth upon: and therefore it is that Religion is ſo pleaſant to him. He would not change his Heavenly delights, which he findeth in the exerciſe of faith, and hope, and love to God, for all the carnal pleaſures of this world: he had rather be a door keeper in the houſe of God, than to dwell in the tents or palaces of wickedneſs: A day in Gods court is better to him than a thouſand, in the court of the greateſt Prince on earth. He is not a ſtranger to *the joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, in which the Kingdom of God doth in part conſiſt, Rom. 14. 17. Pſal. 84. 10. 2. & 65. 4. *In the multitude of his thoughts within him, the comforts of God do delight his ſoul.* Pſal. 94. 19. *His meditation of God is ſweet, and he is glad in the Lord.* Pſal. 104. 34. The freeſt and ſweeteſt of his thoughts and words, run out upon God and the matters of ſalvation. The word of God is ſweeter to him than hony, and better than thouſands of Gold and Silver: *Pſal.* 119. 72. & 119. 103. & 19. 10. *Prov.* 16. 24. And becauſe *his delight is in the law of the Lord*, therefore doth he *meditate in it day and night.* Pſal. 1. 2. He ſeeth great reaſon for all thoſe commands, *Rejoyce ever more*: 1 Theſ. 5. 16. *Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce.* Pſal. 68. 3, 4. & 64. 10. & 31. 1. & 32. 11. *Be glad in the Lord and rejoyce ye righteous: and ſhout for joy all that are upright in heart.* He is ſorry for the poor unhappy world, that have no better things than meat, and drink, and cloaths, and houſe, and land, and mony, and luſt, and play, and domineering over others, to rejoyce in. And heartily he wiſheth that

they

they had but a taste of the Saints delights, that it might make them spit out their luscious, unclean, unwholsome pleasures: One look to Christ, one promise of the Gospel, one serious thought of the life which he must live with God for ever, doth afford his soul more solid comfort, than all the kingdoms on earth can afford. And though he live not continually in these high delights, yet peace with God, and peace of conscience, and some delight in God, and godliness, is the ordinary temperature of his soul, and higher degrees are given him in season for his cordials and his feasts.

But the *weak Christian* hath little of these spiritual delights; his ordinary temper is to apprehend that God and his wayes are indeed most delectable: his very heart acknowledgeth that they are worthiest and fittest to be the matter of his delights: And if he could attain assurance of his special interest in the love of God; and his part in Christ and life eternal, he would then rejoyce in them indeed, and would be gladder than if he were Lord of all the world: But in the mean time, either his fears and doubts are damping his delights, or else (which is much worse) his appetite is dull, and God and holiness relish not with him half so sweetly, as they do with the confirmed Christian; and he is too busie in tasting of fleshly and forbidden pleasures, which yet more deprave his appetite, and dull his desires, to the things of God: so that though in his *Estimation*, *choice*, *resolution* and *endeavour* he much preferreth God before the world yet as to any delightful sweetness in him, it is but little that he tasteth. He loveth God with a *Desiring*

Love,

Love, and with a *Seeking Love*, but with very little of a *Delighting Love*. The remnant of corrupt and alien affections do weaken his affections to the things above; and his infant measure of spiritual life, conjunct with many troublesome diseases, allow him very little of the joy of the Holy Ghost. Nay perhaps he hath more grief, and fear, and doubts, and trouble, and perplexity of mind, than ever he had before he turned unto God: and perhaps he hath yet less pleasure in God, than he had before in sin and sensuallity. Because he had his *sin* in a state of *fruition*, but he hath God only in a *seeking, hoping state*: he had the *best* of sin, and all that ever it will afford him: but he hath yet none of the full felicity which he expecteth in God: The *fruition* of him is yet but in the prospect of *hope*. His *sensual* sinfull life was in its maturity, and the *object present* in its most allurring state: but his spiritual life of faith and love, is but yet in its weak beginnings, and the object absent from our sight: He is so busie at first in blowing up his little spark, not knowing whether the fire will kindle or go out, that he hath little of the use or pleasure, either of its *light* or *warmth*. Infants come crying into the world, and afterwards oftner cry than laugh: Their senses and reason are not yet perfected, or exercised to partake of the *pleasures* of life. And when they do come to know what a laughter is, they will laugh and cry almost in a breath: And those *weak Christians* that do come to taste of *joy* and *pleasure* in their religious state, it is commonly but as a flash of lightning, which leaveth them as dark as they were before. Sometimes in the beginning, upon their first apprehensions

of the love of God in Christ, and of the pardon of their sins, and the privileges of their new condition, and the hopes of everlasting joy, their hearts are transported with unspeakable delight; which is partly from the *newness* of the thing, and partly because God will let them have some encouraging tast, to draw them further, and to convince them of the difference between the pleasures of sin, and the comforts of believing: But these first rejoycings soon abate, and turn into a life of doubts, and fears, and griefs, and care, till they are grown to greater understanding, experience, and setledness in the things of God: The *root* must grow greater and deeper, before it will bear a greater top. Those Christians that in the *weakness* of grace have frequent joys, are usually persons whose weak and passionate nature doth occasion it: (some women especially) that have strong phantasies and passions are alwaies passionately affected with whatsoever they apprehend: And these are like a ship that is tossed in a tempest; that is one while lifted up as to the clouds, and presently cast down as into an infernal gulf: There one day in great joy, and quickly after in as great perplexity and sorrow. Because their comforts or sorrows do follow their present *feeling*, or mutable apprehensions. But when they come to be *confirmed Christians*, they will keep a more constant judgement of themselves, and their own condition, and constantly see their grounds of comfort; and when they cannot raise their souls to any high and passionate joys, they yet walk in a settled peace of soul, and in such competent comforts, as make their lives to be easie and delightful; being well pleased

ed and contented with the happy condition that Christ hath brought them to, and thankful that he left them not in those fooliſh vain pernicious pleaſures, which were the way to endleſs ſorrows.

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* ſeeketh and taketh up his chief contentment in ſome carnal thing: if he be ſo poor and miſerable as to have nothing in poſſeſſion that can much delight him, he will *hope* for better dayes hereafter, and that *hope* ſhall be his chief delight: or if he have no ſuch *hope* he will be *without delight*, and ſhew his love to the world and fleſh, by mourning for that which he cannot have, as others do in rejoycing in what they do poſſeſs; and he will, in ſuch a deſperate caſe of miſery, be ſuch to the world as the weak Chriſtian is to God, who hath a *mourning* and *deſiring love*, when he cannot reach to an *enjoying* and *delighting Love*. His carnal mind moſt favoureth the things of the fleſh, and therefore in them he findeth or ſeeketh his chief delights. Though yet he may have alſo a delight in his ſuperficiall kind of Religion, his hearing, and reading & praying & in his ill-grounded hopes of life eternal: But all this is but ſubordinate to his chiefeſt earthly pleaſure. Iſai. 58. 2. *Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my waies, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of juſtice; they take delight in approaching unto God.* And yet all this was ſubjected to a covetous oppreſſing mind. Mat. 13. 20. *He that received the ſeed into ſtony places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while, for when tribu-*

lation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended. Whereby it appeareth that his love to the *word*, was ſubjected to his love to the *world.*

Obj. *But there are two ſorts of people that ſeem to have no fleſhly delights at all, and yet are not in the way to ſalvation:* viz. *the Quakers, and Behmeniſts that live in great auſterity, and ſome of the Religious orders of the Papiſts, who afflict their fleſh.* Anſw. Some of them undergo their faſtings and pennance for a day, that they may ſin the more quietly all the week after: And ſome of them proudly comfort themſelves with the fancies and conceit of being and appearing more excellent in auſterity than others: And all theſe take up with a carnal ſort of pleaſure. As proud perſons are pleaſed with their own, or others conceits of their beauty, or witt, or worldly greatneſs; ſo *proud* perſons are pleaſed with their own and others conceits of their holineſs. And verily they have their reward, *Mat.* 6. 2. But thoſe of them that place their chiefeſt happineſs in the love of God, and the eternal fruition of him in heaven, and ſeek this ſincerely according to their helps and power, though they are miſled into ſome ſuperſtitious errors, I hope I may number with thoſe that are ſincere; for all their errors and the ill effects of them.

XXIV. 1. A *confirmed Chriſtian* doth ordinarily diſcern the ſincerity of his own heart, and conſequently hath ſome well grounded aſſurance of the pardon of his ſins, and of the favour of God, and of his everlaſting happineſs: And therefore no wonder if he live a peaceable and joyfull life. For his grace is not ſo *ſmall* as to be

undiſcernable

undiscernable, nor is it as a sleepy buried seed or principle; but it is almost in continual act: And they that have a great degree of grace, and also keep it in lively exercise, do seldom doubt of it. Besides that they blot not their Evidence by so many infirmities and falls: They are more in the light, and have more acquaintance with themselves, and more sense of the abundant love of God, and of his exceeding mercies, than weak Christians have: and therefore must needs have more assurance. They have boldness of access to the throne of grace, without unreverent contempt: *Eph.* 3. 12. & 2. 18. They have more of the spirit of Adoption, and therefore more child-like confidence in God, and can call him *Father* with greater freedom and comfort than any others can. Rom. 8. 15, 16. Gal. 4. 6. Eph. 1. 6. 1 Joh. 5. 19, 20. [*And we know that we are of God, and that the whole world lyeth in wickedness*: &c.

2. But the *weak Christian* hath so small a degree of grace, and so much corruption, and his grace is so little in act, and his sin so much, that he seldom if ever attaineth to any well-grounded assurance, till he attain to a greater measure of grace. He differeth so little from the *seeming Christian*, that neither himself nor others do certainly discern the difference. When he searcheth after the truth of his *faith*, and *love*, and *heavenly mindedness*, he findeth so much unbelief and aversness from God, and earthly mindedness, that he cannot be certain which of them is predominant; and whether the interest of this world or that to come, do bear the sway. So that he is often in perplexities and fears, and more often in a dull uncertainty: And if he seem at any

time to have assurance; it is usually but an ill-grounded perswasion of the truth: though it be true which he apprehendeth, when he taketh himself to be the child of God, yet it is upon unsound reasons that he judgeth so, or else upon sound reasons weakly and uncertainly discerned: so that there is commonly much of *security*, presumption, fancie, or mistake, in his greatest comforts. He is not yet in a condition fit for full assurance, till his love and obedience be more full.

3. But the *seeming Christian* cannot possibly in that estate, have either certainty, or good probability that he is a child of God, because it is not true: His seeming certainty is meerly self-deceit, and his greatest confidence is but presumption, because the spirit of Christ is not within him, and therefore he is certainly none of his, *Rom.* 8. 9.

XXV. 1. The *Assurance* of a *confirmed Christian* doth *increase his alacrity and diligence in duty*; and is alwayes seen in his more obedient, holy, fruitful life: The sense of the love and mercy of God, is as the rain upon the tender grass. He is never so fruitful, so thankful, so heavenly, as when he hath the greatest certainty that he shall be saved: The Love of God is then shed abroad upon his heart by the Holy Ghost, which maketh him abound in love to God, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. He is the more stedfast, unmoveable and alwaies, abounding in the work of the Lord, when he is most certain that his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

2. But the *weak Christian* is unfit yet to manage assurance well: and therefore it is that it is not given him:

him: Graces must grow proportionably together. If he be but confidently perswaded that he is justified and shall be saved, he is very apt to gather some consequence from it, that tendeth to security and to the remitting of his watchfulness and care: He is ready to be the bolder with sin, and stretch his conscience, and omit some duties, and take more fleshly liberty and ease, and think, Now I am a child of God, I am out of danger, I am sure I cannot totally fall away: And though his *judgement* conclude not [*therefore I may venture further upon worldly fleshly pleasures, and need not be so strict and diligent as I was*] yet his *heart* and *practice* thus conclude. And he is most obedient when he is most in fear of hell, and he is worst in his heart and life, when he is most confident that all his danger is past. *Heb.* 4. 1, 2. & 3. 14, 15. 16.

3. But the *seeming Christian*, though he have no assurance, is hardned in his carnal state by his presumption. Had he but assurance to be saved without a holy life, he would cast off that very *image* of godliness which he yet retaineth. The conceit of his own sincerity and salvation, is that which deludeth and undoeth him. What sin would not gain or pleasure draw him to commit, if he were but sure to be forgiven? It is fear of hell that causeth that seeming religion which he hath: And therefore if that fear be gone, all is gone; and all his piety and diligence and righteousness is come to nought: *Gal.* 6. 3. *Joh.* 8. 39, 42, 44.

XXVI. 1. For all his assurance, a *confirmed Christian* is so well acquainted with his manifold imperfections, and daily failings, and great

unworthineſs, that he is very *low and vile* in his *owne eyes*; and therefore can eaſily endure to be *low* and *vile* in the eyes of *others*: He hath a conſtant ſenſe of the burden of his remaining ſin: Eſpecially he doth even abhor himſelf, when he findeth the averſeneſs of his heart to God, and how little he knoweth of him, and how little he loveth him, in compariſon of what he ought, and how little of Heaven is upon his heart, and how ſtrange and backward his thoughts are to the life to come. Theſe are as fetters upon his ſoul: He daily groaneth under them as a captive, that he ſhould be yet ſo carnal, and unable to ſhake off the remnant of his infirmities, as if he were *ſold under ſin*, that is, in bondage to it, *Rom.* 7. 14. He hateth himſelf more for the imperfections of his love and obedience to God, than hypocrites do for their reigning ſin. And O how he longeth for the day of his deliverance! *Rom.* 7. 24. He thinketh it no great injury for another to judge of him as he judgeth of himſelf, even to be leſs than the leaſt of all Gods mercies: He is more troubled for being over praiſed and overvalued, than for being diſpraiſed and vilified; as thinking thoſe that praiſe him are more miſtaken, and lay the more dangerous ſnare for his ſoul. For he hath a ſpecial antipathy to pride: and wondreth that any rational man can be ſo blind as not to ſee enough to humble him: For his own part (in the midſt of all Gods graces) he ſeeth in himſelf ſo much darkneſs, imperfection, corruption, and want of further grace, that he is loathſom and burdenſom continually to himſelf: If you ſee him ſad or troubled, and ask him the cauſe, it is ten to one but it is *him-*

ſelf

ſelf that he complaineth of: The frowardeſt wife, the moſt undutiful child, the moſt diſobedient ſervant, the moſt injurious neighbour, the moſt malicious enemy, is not half ſo great a trouble to him as he is to himſelf. He prayeth abundantly more againſt his own corruption, than againſt any of theſe. O could he but *know* and *love* God more, and be more in heaven, and willinger to die, and freer from his own diſtempers, how eaſily could he bear all croſſes, or injuries from others? He came to Chriſts ſchool as a little child, *Mat.* 18. 3. And ſtill he is little in his own eſteem: And therefore diſeſteem and contempt from others, is no great matter with him. He thinks it can be no great wrong, that is done againſt ſo poor a worm, and ſo unworthy a ſinner as himſelf (except as God or the ſouls of men may be intereſted in the cauſe.) He heartily approveth of the juſtice of God, in abhorring the proud; and hath learned that Rom. 12. 10. [*in honour preferring one another*] and Gal. 5. 26. *Let us not be deſirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

2. But the remnant of *Pride* is uſually the moſt notable ſin, of the *weak Chriſtian*: Though it reigneth not, it fouly blemiſheth him. He would fain be taken for ſome body in the Church: He is ready to ſtep up into a higher room, and to think himſelf wiſer and better than he is. If he can but ſpeak confidently of the principles of Religion, and ſome few controverſies which he hath made himſelf ſick with, he is ready to think himſelf fit to be a preacher. He looketh through a magniſying glaſs upon all his own performances and gifts: He loveth to be valued and praiſed:

He can hardly bear to be ſlighted and diſpraiſed, but is ready to think hardly of thoſe that do it, if not to hate them in ſome degree. He loveth not to be found fault with, though it be neceſſary to his amendment. And though all this vice of pride be not ſo predominant in him, as to conquer his humility, yet doth it much obſcure and interrupt it: And though he *hate* this his pride and ſtrive againſt it, and lamenteth it before God, yet ſtill it is the ſoreſt ulcer in his ſoul: And ſhould it prevail and overcome him, he would be abhorred of God, and it would be his ruine. 2 *Chro.* 16.10,12, *Luk.*22.24,25,26.

3. But in the *Hypocrite Pride* is the reigning ſin: The praiſe of men is the aire which he liveth in: He was never well acquainted with himſelf; and never felt aright the burden of his ſins and wants: and therefore cannot bear contempt from others: Indeed if his corrupt diſpoſition turn moſt to the way of coveteouſneſs, tyranny, or luſt, he can the eaſier bear contempt from others, as long as he hath his will at home; and he can ſpare their love, if he can be but feared and domineer. But ſtill his Pride is predominant; and when it affecteth not much the reputation of *goodneſs*, it affecteth the name of being *rich* or *great*. Sin may make him ſordid, but grace doth not make him humble. Pride is the vital ſpirit of the corrupted ſtate of man.

XXVII. 1. A *confirmed Chriſtian* is acquainted with the deceitfulneſs of mans heart, and the particular corrupt inclinations that are in it; and eſpecially with his own; and he is acquainted with the wiles and methods of the tempter, and what are the materials which he maketh his baits

baits of, and what is the manner in which he spreadeth his nets: He seeth alwaies some snares before him: And what company soever he is in, or what business soever he is about, he walketh as among snares, which are visible to his sight: And it is part of his business continually to avoid them. He liveth in a continual watch, and warfare. He can resist much stronger and subtill temptations, than the weak can do. He is allwayes armed, and knoweth what are the special remedies, against each particular snare and sin. *Eph.* 6. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. *Prov.* 1. 17. And he carrieth always his antidotes about him, as one that liveth in an infectious world, and in the midst of a froward and perverse generation, from which he is charged to save himself. *Phil.* 2. 15. *Act.* 2. 40.

2. And the *weak Christian* is a souldier in the army of Christ, and is engaged in striving against sin, *Heb.* 12. 4. And really taketh the flesh and world, as well as the Devil, to be his enemies, and doth not only *strive*, but *conquer* in the main: But yet alas, how poorly is he armed? How unskilfully doth he manage his Christian armour? How often is he foild and wounded? How many a temptation is he much unacquainted with? And how many a snare doth lie before him which he never did observe? And oft he is overcome in particular temptations, when he never perceiveth it, but thinks that he hath conquered.

3. But the *Hypocrite* is fast ensnared when he gloryeth most of his integrity, and is deceived by his own heart, and thinketh he is something, when he is nothing, *Gal.* 6. 3. *Luk.* 18. 20, 21, 22, 23. When he is thanking God that he is not as

other

other men, he is rejoycing in his dreams, and ſacrificing for the victory which he never obtained. *Luk.* 18. 11. He is led by Satan captive at his will, when he is boaſting of his uprightneſs; and hath a beam of coveteouſneſs, or pride, or cruelty in his own eye, while he is reviling, or cenſuring another for the mote of ſome difference about a ceremony, or tolerable opinion. And uſually ſuch grow worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived. *Mat.* 7. 3, 4, 5. 2 *Tim.* 3. 13.

XXVIII. 1. A *Chriſtian indeed*, is one that hath deliberately counted, what it may coſt him to follow Chriſt and to ſave his ſoul; and knowing that *ſuffering with Chriſt* is the way to our *reigning with* him, he hath fully conſented to the terms of Chriſt: He hath read *Luk.* 14. 26, 27, 33. and findeth that *bearing the Croſs and forſaking all*, is neceſſary to thoſe that will be Chriſts diſciples: And accordingly in reſolution he hath *forſaken all*; and looketh not for a ſmooth and eaſie way to heaven: He conſidereth that *all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution*, and that *through many tribulations we muſt enter into heaven*: And therefore he taketh it not for a ſtrange or unexpected thing, if *the fiery trial* come upon him. He doth not wonder at the unrighteouſneſs of the world, as if he expected *reaſon*, or *honeſty*, *juſtice*, or *truth*, or *mercy* in the enemies of Chriſt, and the inſtruments of Satan: He will not bring his action againſt the Devil, for unjuſt afflicting him. He will rather *turn the other cheek to him* that ſmiteth him, than he will hinder the good of any ſoul by ſeeking right; much leſs will he exerciſe unjuſt revenge. Though where government is exerciſed for truth and righteouſneſs, he will

will not refuse to make use of the justice of it to punish iniquity, and discourage evil doers, yet this is for *God* and the *common good*, and for the suppression of sin, much more than for himself. Suffering doth not *surprise* him as a thing unlooked for: He hath been long preparing for it, and it findeth him garrison'd in the love of Christ: Yea (though his flesh will be as the flesh of others, sensible of the smart, and his mind is not *senseless* of the sufferings of his body, yet) it is some pleasure and satisfaction to his soul, to find himself in the common way to heaven, and to see the predictions of Christ fulfilled, and to feel himself so far conform to Jesus Christ his head, and to trace the footsteps of a humbled Redeemer in the way before him: As *Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, so doth the Christian arm himself with the same mind.* 1 Pet. 4. 1. *He rejoyceth that he is made partaker of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed*, he may also be partaker of the *exceeding joy.* 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13. yea he taketh the *reproach of Christ* for a treasure, yea a greater treasure than Riches, or mens favours can afford, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. For he knoweth if he be reproached for the *name* or sake of *Christ* he is *happy*: For thereby he *glorifieth that God* whom the enemy doth *blaspheme*, and so the *spirit of God*, and of *glory resteth on him*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. He liveth and suffereth as one that from his heart believeth, that *they are blessed that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for great is their reward in heaven. And they are blessed when men shall revile them and persecute them, and say all manner of evil against them falsly for Christs sake*: In this they *Rejoyce and are exceeding glad*, as knowing that herein they are *followers of*

them

them who through faith and patience inherit the promiſe, Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. *Heb.* 6. 12. If he be *offered upon the ſacrifice* and *ſervice of the faith* of Gods elect, he can *rejoyce in it* as having greater *good* than evil, *Phil.* 2. 17. He can ſuffer the loſs of all things, and account them *dung* that he may *win Chriſt, and be found in him, and know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable to his death.* Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10. Not out of *ſurlineſs* and *pride* doth he rejoyce in ſufferings; (as ſome do, that they may carry the reputation of holy and undaunted men; and ſeem to be far better and conſtanter than others.) When *pride* maketh men ſuffer, they are partly the Devils martyrs, though the cauſe be never ſo good: Though it is much *more ordinary* for *pride* to make men *ſuffer rejoycingly* in an *ill cauſe* than in a *good*; the Devil having more power on his *own ground* than on *Chriſts*. But it is the Love of Chriſt, and the belief of the reward, and the humble neglect of the mortified fleſh, and the contempt of the conquered world, that maketh the Chriſtian ſuffer with ſo much joy. For he ſeeth that the Judge is at the door: And what torments the wicked are preparing for themſelves: And that as certainly as there is a God that governeth the world, and that in Righteouſneſs, ſo certainly are his eyes upon the Righteous, and his face is ſet againſt them that do evil: 1 *Pet.* 3. 12: and *though ſinners do evil an hundred times* and ſcape unpuniſhed till their dayes be prolonged, yet vengeance will overtake them in due time, and it ſhall be well with them that fear the Lord; and that he keepeth all the tears of his ſervants till the reckoning day: And

judgement begin at the house of God, and the *righteous be saved* through so much suffering and labour; what then shall be their end that *obey not the Gospel?* and *where shall the ungodly* and sinner appear. 1 *Pet.* 4. 17, 18. *Eccl.* 8. 12. *Prov.* 11. 31. 13. 6. *Psal.* 56. 8. *Deut.* 32. 35. *Jam.* 5. 9,

2. And the *weak Christian* is one that will *forsake all* for the sake of Christ, and suffer with him that he may be glorified with him, and will make his treasure in heaven for all: *Luk.* 14. 26, 33. *Luk.* 18. 22. But he doth it not with that *easiness* and *alacrity*, and joy as the confirmed Christian doth. He hearkens more to the flesh which saith, *favour thy self*: suffering is much more grievous to him: And sometimes he is wavering before he can bring himself fully to resolve, and let go all. *Mat.* 16. 22.

3. But the *seeming Christian looketh* not for much suffering: He reads of it in the Gospel, but he saw no probability of it, and never believed that he should be called to it in any notable degree: He thought it probable that he might well escape it: And therefore though he agreed verbally to take Christ for *better* and *worse*, and to follow him through sufferings, he thought he would never put him to it. And indeed his heart is secretly resolved, that he will never be *undone in the world* for Christ: Some reparable loss he may undergo, but he will not let go life and all. He will still be religious and hope for heaven: But he will make himself believe (and others if he can) that the *Truth* lieth on the safer side, and not on the suffering side; and that it is but for their own conceits and scrupulosity that other men suffer who go beyond him; and that many good men are of his opinion,

opinion, and therefore he may be good also in the same opinion (though he would never have been of that opinion, if it had not been necessary to his escaping of sufferings) what flourish soever he maketh for a time, *when persecution ariseth he is offended and withereth.* Mat. 13. 21, 6. Unless he be so deeply engaged among the suffering party, that he cannot come off without perpetual reproach, and then perhaps *Pride* will make him suffer more, than the belief of heaven or the love of Christ could do: And all this is because his very *belief* is unrooted and unsound; and he hath secretly at the heart a fear that if he should suffer death for Christ, he should be a loser by him, and he would not reward him according to his promise, with everlasting life. *Heb.* 3. 12.

XXIX. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that followeth not Christ for company, nor holdeth his belief in trust upon the credit of any in the world, and therefore he would *stick to Christ, if all that he knoweth or converseth with should forsake him.* If the Rulers of the Earth should change their religion, and turn against Christ, he would not forsake him: If the multitude of the people turn against him; nay if the professors of Godliness should fall off, yet would he stand his ground and be still the same: If the learnedest men, and the Pastors of the Church should turn from Christ, he would not forsake him: Yea if his neareſt relations and friends, or even that Minister that was the means of his conversion, should change their minds and forsake the truth, and turn from Christ or a holy life, he would yet be constant and be still the same: And what *Peter* resolved on, he would truly practise, Mat. 26, 33, 35. *Though all men*

should

ould be offended because of thee, yet would not I be offended: Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. And if he thought himself as *Elias* did, *left alone*, yet would he not bow the knee to *Baal* Rom. 11. 3. If he hear that this eminent Minister falleth off one day, and the other mother day, till all be gone, yet still the foundation of God standeth sure; he falleth not because he is built upon the rock, *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. His heart saith; Alas, whither shall I go, if I go from Christ? Is there any other that hath the word and spirit of eternal life? Can I be a gainer if I lose my soul? *Job.* 6. 67, 68. *Mat.* 16. 26. He useth his Teachers to bring him that light and evidence of truth, which *dwelleth in him* when they are gone: And therefore though they fall away, he falleth not with them.

2. And the *weakest Christian* believeth with a Divine faith of his own, and dependeth more on God than man: But yet if he should be put to so great a tryal, as to see all the Pastors and Christians that he knoweth change their minds, I know not what he would do: For though God will uphold all his own whom he will save, yet he doth it by *means* and *outward helps*, together with his internal grace; and keepeth them from temptations, when he will deliver them from the evil: And therefore it is a doubt whether there be not degrees of grace so weak, as would fail in case the strongest temptations were permitted to assault them. A strong man can stand and go of himself; but an infant must be carried; and the lame and sick must have others to support them. The weak Christian falleth if his Teacher or most esteemed company fall: If they run into

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an error, sect, or schisme, he keeps them company. He groweth cold, if he have not warming company: He forgetteth himself, and letteth loose his sense and passion, if he have not some to watch over him, and warn him: No man should refuse the help of others, that can have it; and the best have need of all Gods means: But the *weak Christian* needeth them much more than the strong, and is much less able to stand without them. *Luk.* 22. 32. *Gal.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is built upon the sand, and therefore cannot stand a storm: He is a Christian more for company, or the credit of man, or the interest that others have in him, or the encouragement of the times, than from a firm Belief and love of Christ: and therefore falleth when his props are gone: *Mat.* 7. 24.

XXX. 1. *A strong Christian can digest the hardest Truths*, and the *hardest works* of *Providence*. He seeth more of the reason and evidence of truths than others: And he hath usually a more comprehensive knowledge, and can reconcile those truths which short sighted persons suspect to be inconsistent and contradictory: And when he cannot reconcile them, he knoweth they are reconcileable: For he hath laid his foundation well, and then he reduceth other truths to that, and buildeth them on it. And so he doth by the *hardest Providences*: Whoever is high or low, whoever prospereth or is afflicted, however humane affairs are carried, and all things seem to go against the Church and cause of Christ, he knoweth yet that *God is good to Israel*, Psal. 73. 1, 2. and that he is the *righteous Judge of all the earth*, and that the *righteous shall have dominion in the morning*, and it *shall go*

well

well with them that fear the Lord: For he goeth into the Sanctuary, and foreseeth the end. *Eccl.* 8. 11, 12, 13. *Psal.* 73. 17. *Psal.* 115. 11, 13. and 135. 19.

2. But the *weak Christian* is very hard put to it when he meeteth with difficult passages of Scripture, and when he seeth it *go with the righteous according to the work of the wicked, and with the wicked according to the work of the righteous*, Eccl. 8. 14. Though he is not *over-turned* by such difficulties, yet his foot is ready to slip, and he digesteth them with much perplexity and trouble.

3. But the *seeming unsettled Christian* is often overcome by them, and turneth away from Christ, and faith, These are hard sayings, or hard Providences, who can bear them, *Joh.* 6. 60. 66. And thus unbelief thence gathereth matter for its increase.

XXXI. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that *can exercise all Gods graces in conjunction, and in their proper places and proportion, without setting one against another*, or neglecting one while he is exercising another. He can be *humbled* without hindering his *thankefulness and joy*; and he can be *thankefull and joyfull* without hindering his due *humility*. His *knowledge* doth not destroy but quicken *his zeal*: His *wisdom* hindereth not, but furthereth his *innocency*. His *faith* is a help to his *repentance*, and his *repentance* to his *faith*. His *love to himself* doth not hinder but help his *love to others*: and his *Love to God* is the *end* of both. He can mourn for the sins of the times, and the calamities of the Church, yea for his own sins and imperfections, and yet rejoyce for the mercies which he hath in possession or in hope. He findeth that piety and charity are

necessarily conjunct; and every grace and duty is a help to all the rest. Yea he can exercise his Graces methodically, which is the comelineſs and beauty of his heart and life. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17.

2. But the *weak Chriſtian*, though he *have* every Grace, and his Obedience is univerſal, yet can he hardly ſet himſelf to any duty, but it hindereth him from ſome other duty, through the narrowneſs and weakneſs of his mind. When he is humbling himſelf in confeſſion of ſin, he can ſcarce be lively in thankfulneſs for mercy: When he rejoyceth it hindereth his humiliation. He can hardly do one duty without omitting or hindering another. He is either all for *joy*, or all for *ſorrow*; all for *love* or all for *fear*; and cannot well do many things at once, but is apt to ſeparate the *Truths* and *Duties* which God hath inſeparably conjoyned.

3. And for the *ſeeming Chriſtian*, he exerciſeth *no grace* in *ſincerity*, nor is he univerſal in his Obedience to God; Though he may have the *image* of every Grace and Duty.

XXXII. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* is more in *getting* and *uſing* his Graces, than in enquiring whether he *have* them. He is very deſirous to be *aſſured* that he is ſincere; but he is more deſirous to *be* ſo: And he knoweth that even *aſſurance* is got more by the *exerciſe* and *increaſe* of Grace than by bare enquiry whether we have it already; Not that he is a neglecter of ſelf-examination: But he oftener asketh, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* than, *How ſhall I know that I ſhall be ſaved?*

2. But *the weak Chriſtian* hath more of *ſelf*, and leſs of God in his ſolicitouſneſs: And though he be

be willing to obey the whole Law of Christ, yet he is much more solicitous to know that he is out of *danger*, and shall be *saved*, than to be *fully pleasing* unto God. And therefore proportionably, he is more in enquiring by what *marks* he may know that he shall be saved, than by what *means* he may attain more holyness, and what *diligence* is necessary to his salvation.

3. But the *seeming Christian* is most carefull how to prosper in the World, or please his flesh? and next, how he may be sure to escape damnation when he hath done; and least of all how he may be conform to Christ in holyness.

XXXIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* doth study *Duty more than Events*; and is more carefull what he shall *be towards God*, than what he shall *have from God* in this life. He looketh to his *own part*, more than unto *Gods*; as knowing that it *is he* that is like to *fail*; but God will never fail of his part. He is much more suspicious of himself than of God. And when any thing goeth amiss, he blameth himself, and not Gods Providence: he knoweth that the hairs of his head are numbred, and that his Father knoweth what he needeth; and that God is infinitely wiser and fitter to dispose of him than he is to choose for himself: and that God loveth him better than he can love himself: And therefore he thankfully accepteth that easie, indulgent command; *Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you: Take no thought what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith you shall be cloathed. Heb.* 12. 15. & 13. 5. Job 1. 21, 22. Mat. 10. 30. & 6. 25, 31, 32. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

But alas, how guilty is the *weak Christian* of meddling with Gods part of the work. How sin-

carefull what will become of him, and of his Family and Affairs, and of the Church, as if he were afraid lest God would prove forgetfull, unfaithfull, or insufficient for his work: so imperfect is his Trust in God.

3. And the *seeming Christian* really trusteth him not at all, for any thing that he can trust himself or the Creature for: He will have two strings to his bow if he can; but it is in man that he placeth his greatest trust for any thing that man can do. Indeed to save his Soul he knoweth none but God is to be trusted, and therefore his life is still preferred before his Soul, and consequently man whom he trusteth most with his life and prosperity, is really trusted before God, however God may have the Name. *Jer.* 17. 5, 7. *Psal.* 34. 8. & 20. 7. & 34. 22. & 37. 3.

XXXIV. 1. A *Christian indeed* is much more studious of his *own duty towards others*, than of *theirs* to him: He is much more fearfull of *doing wrong*, than of receiving wrong. He is more troubled if he say ill of others, than if others speak ill of him. He had farre rather be slandered himself, than slander others; or be censured himself than censure others; or be unjustly hurt himself, than unjustly hurt another; or to be put out of his own possessions or right, than to put another out of his. He is oftner and sharper in judging and reproving himself than others: he falleth out with himself more frequently than with others: and is more troubled with himself than with all the world besides: he taketh *himself* for his *greatest enemy*, and knoweth that his *danger* is most at home; and that if he can escape but from *himself*, no one in Earth or Hell can undo him. He is more carefull of his duty to his Prince, his Parents, his

Pastor,

Pastor, or his Master, than of theirs to him: he is much more unwilling to be disobedient to them in any lawfull thing, or to dishonour them, than to be oppressed or unjustly afflicted or abused by them. And all this is, because he knoweth that *sin* is worse than present suffering; and that he is not to answer for other mens sins but for his own: nor shall he be condemned for the sins of any but himself: And that many millions are condemned for wronging others, but no one for being wronged by others. 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *Matth.* 5. 10, 11, 12. 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, 15, 16, 17.

2. And the *weak Christian* is of the same mind in the main; but with so much imperfection, that he is much more frequent in censuring others, and complaining of their wrongs, and finding fault with them, and aggravating all that is said or done against himself, when he is hardly made so sensible of as great miscarriages in himself; as having much more uncharitableness, partiality, and selfishness, than a confirmed Christian hath. There are few things which weakness of Grace doth more ordinarily appear in, than this partiality and selfishness, in judging of the *faults* or *duties* of others, and of his own. How apt are (not only Hypocrites, but) weak Christians, to aggravate all that is done *against them?* and to extenuate or justifie all that *they* do against another? O what a noyse they make of it, if they think that any one hath wronged them? defamed them? disparaged them? or incroached on their right? If God himself be blasphemed or abused, they can more patiently bear it, and make not so great a matter of it. Who heareth of such angry complaints on Gods behalf, as on mens own? Of such passionate

invectives, such sharp prosecutions, against those that wrong both God, and mens Souls, as against those that wrong a selfish person; (And usually every man seemeth to wrong him, who keepeth from him any thing which he would have, or saith any thing of him which is displeasing to him.) Go to the Assizes and Courts of Justice; look into the Prisons, and enquire whether it be Zeal for God, or for mens *selves*, which is the Plaintiff and Prosecutor? and whether it be for wronging God or them, that all the stirre is made? Men are ready to say, God is sufficient to right himself: As if he were not the Original and the End of Laws and Government, and Magistrates were not his Officers, to promote obedience to Him in the World.

At this time how universal is mens complaint against their Governors! how common are the cryes of the poor and sufferers, of the greatness of their burdens, miseries and wants. But how few lament the sins against Government, which this Land hath been sadly guilty of? The Pastors complain of the Peoples contempt: The People complain of the Pastors insufficiency and lives: The Master complaineth how hard it is to get good Servants, that will mind their business and profit, as if it were their own: Servants complain of their Masters for over-labouring them, or using them too hardly. Landlords say that their Tenants cheat them: And Tenants say, that their Landlords oppress and grind them. But if you were Christians indeed, the commonest and saddest complaints would be against *your selves*: I am not so good a Ruler, so peaceable a Subject, so good a Landlord, so good a Tenant, so good a Master,

Master, so good a Servant, as ought to be. Your Rulers sin, your Subjects sin, your Landlords sin, your Tenants sin, your Masters sin, your Servants sin, shall not be charged upon *you* in Judgement, nor condemn you, but your *own* sin. How much more therefore should you *see*, and *feel*, and *complain* of your own, than of theirs.

3. As for the *seeming Christian*, I have told you already that *selfishness* is his nature and predominant constitution: And according to *self-interest* he judgeth of almost all things: of the faults, and duties of others and himself: And therefore no man seemeth honest or innocent to him, who displeaseth him, and is against his worldly interest: Cross him about *Mine* and *Thine*, and he will beknave the honestest man alive, and call his ancient friend his enemy. But of his dealings with them, he is not so scrupulous, nor so censorious of himself.

XXXV. 1. A *Christian indeed* is much taken upon the Government of his *Thoughts*, and hath them so much ordinarily in obedience, that God and his service, and the matters of his salvation have that precedency in them: and his eye is fixed on his *end* and *duty*: And his thoughts refuse not to serve him for any work of God to which he calleth them. He suffereth them not to be the inlets or agents for Pride, or Lust, or Envy, or Voluptuousness, or to contrive iniquity: But if any such sparks from Hell are cast into his thoughts, he presently laboureth to extinguish them: If they intrude, he letteth them not lodge or dwell there. And though he cannot keep out all disorder or vanity, or inordinate delights; yet

is it his endeavour, and he leaveth not his heart to any thing to it self.

2. The *weak Christian* also maketh conscience of his thoughts, and alloweth them not to be the inlets or servants of any reigning sin: But alas how imperfectly doth he govern them? what a deal of vanity and confusion is in them? how carelesly doth he watch them? how remisly doth he rebuke them, excite them and command them? how oft are they defiled with impurity and uncharitableness? And how little doth he repent of this, or endeavour to reform it? And little serviceable are his thoughts, to any high and heavenly work, in comparison of the confirmed Christian.

3. And the *seeming Christian* is very little employed about his Thoughts; but leaveth them to be the servants of his pride and worldlyness or sensuality, or some reigning sin. *Psal.* 10. 4. *Matth.* 15. 19. 1 *Cor.* 3. 20. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Jer.* 4. 14. and 6. 19.

XXVI. 1. *A Christian indeed* is much employed in the Government of his *passions*: and hath so far mastered them, as that they prevail not to pervert his judgement, nor to discompose his heart so farre as to interrupt much his communion with God, nor to ensnare his heart to any Creature, nor to breed any fixed uncharitableness or malice in him, nor to cause his tongue to speak things injurious to God or Man, to curse or swear, or rail, or lie: nor yet to cause him to hurt and injure any in his heart. But when passion would be inordinate, either in delights or desires, or anger, or grief, or fear or hope, he flyeth to his helps to suppress and govern them. (Though

fear

...is more out of mans power than the rest, and therefore ordinarily hath less of sin). He knoweth that Christ hath blessed the *meek*, *Matth.* 5. and bid us learn of *him to be meek and lowly*, *Matth.* 11. 28, 29. And that a *meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. It is therefore his care and course to *give place to wrath*, when others are angry, *Rom.* 12. 18, 19. and *if it be possible as much as in him lyeth to live peaceably with all men*: Yea to *follow peace* when it flyeth from him, *Heb.* 12. 14. And not when he *is reviled* to *revile again*, nor to *threaten* or *revenge himself* on them that injure him: 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22, 23, 24. *Reason* and *Charity* hold the reins, and passion is kept under: Yea, it is *used* holily for God; *Eph.* 4. 26. Slow to anger he is in his own cause, and watchfull over his anger even in Gods cause. *Prov.* 15. 18. and 16. 32. *Eph.* 4. 31. *Col.* 3. 8.

2. But the *weak Christian* doth greatly shew his weakness, in his unruly passions, (if he have a temper of body disposed to passion): They are oft rising, and not easily kept under: Yea and too often prevail for such unseemly words, as maketh him become a dishonour to his profession. Oft he resolveth, and promiseth and prayeth for help, and yet the next provocation sheweth how little Grace he hath to hold the reins. And his passionate Desires, and Delights, and Love and Sorrows, are oft as unruly as his *anger*, to the further weakning of his Soul. They are like Ague fits that leave the health impaired.

3. And the *strong Christian* hath much less power over those Passions, which must subserve the carnal minde. For *Anger* it dependeth much upon

upon the temperature of the *body*, and if that incline him not strongly to it, his credit or common discretion may suppress it. Unless you touch his chiefest *carnal interest*, and then he will not only be *angry* but *cruel*, *malicious*, and *revengeful*. But his carnal *Love*, and *Desire* and *Delight* which are placed upon that pleasure, or profit, or honour, which is his Idol, are indeed the *reigning* passions in him: and his grief, and fear and anger are but the servants unto these. *Act.* 24, 26, 27.

XXXVII. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that keepeth a constant *Government of his Tongue*: he knoweth how much *duty* or *fit* it will be the instrument of: According to his ability and opportunity he useth it to the service and honour of his Creator: in speaking of his Excellencies, his Works and Word: inquiring after the knowledge of him and his will: instructing others, and pleading for the Truth and wayes of God, and rebuking the impiety and iniquities of the world, as his place and calling doth allow him: He bridleth his Tongue from uttering vanity, filthiness, ribbaldry, foolish and uncomely talk and jests; from rash and unreverent talk of God, and taking of his Name in vain; from the venting of undigested and uncertain doctrines, which may prove erroneous and perilous to mens souls: from speaking imprudently, unhandsomly, or unseasonably about holy things, so as to expose them to contempt and scorn: from lying, censuring others without a warrantable ground and call: from backbiting, slandering, false accusing, railing and reviling, malicious, envyous, injurious speech, which tendeth to extinguish the love of the hearers

to

to thoſe he ſpeaketh of: from proud and boaſting ſpeeches of himſelf, much more from ſwearing, curſing, and blaſphemous ſpeech, and oppoſition to the Truths and holy wayes of God, or opprobrious ſpeeches, or deriſion of his ſervants. And in the Government of his Tongue, he alwayes begineth with his *heart*; that he may *underſtand* and *love* the good which he ſpeaketh of, and may hate the evil which his tongue forbeareth; and not hypocritically to force his tongue againſt or without his heart: His tongue doth not run before his heart, but is ruled by it. *Eph.* 4. 15. 31. 29. and 5. 3. 4. 6. *Pſal.* 37. 30. & 15. 2, 3. *Prov.* 16. 13. and 10. 20. & 21. 23. & 18. 21. & 15. 2, 4. *Pſal.* 34. 13. *Prov.* 25. 15, 23. & 28. 23. *Matth.* 12. 31, 32, 34.

2. But the *weak Chriſtian*, though his tongue be ſincerely ſubject to the Laws of God, yet frequently miſcarryeth, and blemiſheth his Soul by the words of his lips; being much oftner than the confirmed Chriſtian overtaken with words of vanity, medling, folly, imprudence, uncharitableneſs, wrath, boaſting, venting uncertain or erroneous opinions, *&c.* ſo that the unrulineſs of his tongue is the trouble of his heart, if not alſo of the Family, and all about him.

3. The *ſeeming Chriſtian* uſeth his tongue in the ſervice of his carnal ends, and therefore alloweth it ſo much unjuſtice, uncharitableneſs, falſhood, and other ſins; as his *carnal intereſt* and deſigns require: But the reſt perhaps he may ſuppreſs, eſpecially if natural ſobriety, good education and prudence do aſſiſt him.: And his tongue is alwayes better than his heart. *Pro.* 10. 32. & 19. 5. 9. *Pſ.* 50. 20. & 12. 3. & 144. 8. & 120. 2, 3. *Prov.* 21. 6. 23.

XXXVIII. 1. The *Religious discourse* of a *confirmed Christian* is most about the greatest and most necessary matters: Heart-work and heaven-work are the usual employment of his *Tongue* and *Thoughts*: unprofitable Controversies, and hurtfull wranglings he abhorreth: And profitable Controversies he manageth sparingly, seasonably, charitably, peaceably, and with caution and sobriety, as knowing that the *servant of the Lord must not strive*, and that strife of words perverteth the hearers, and hindereth edifying. 1 *Tim.* 6. 4, 5, 6. and 4. 7, 8. 2 *Tim.* 2. 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25. His ordinary discourse is about the Glorious Excellencies, Attributes, Relations, and works of God; and the Mysterie of Redemption, the Person, Office, Covenant and Grace of Christ; the renewing, illuminating, sanctifying works of the Holy Ghost; the Mercies of this life, and that to come: the Duty of Man to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerater: the corruption and deceitfulness of the Heart; the methods of the Tempter; the danger of particular Temptations; and the means of our escape, and of our growth in Grace; and how to be profitable to others; and especially to the Church. And if he be called to open any Truth which others understand not, he doth it not proudly to set up himself as the Master of a Sect, or to draw Disciples after him, nor make divisions about it in the Church; but soberly to the edification of the weak: And though he be ready to defend the Truth against perverse gainsayers in due season, yet doth he not turn his ordinary edifying discourse into Disputes or talk of Controversies; nor hath such a proud pugnacious Soul, as to assault every one that he thinks

erroneous,

oneous, as a man that taketh himself for the at champion of the truth.

2. But the *weak Christian* hath a more unfruitful wandring tongue: And his religious discourse most about his opinions or party, or some external thing: As which is the best preacher, or person, book: or if he talk of any text of scripture, doctrine of Religion, it is much of the *outside* it; and his discourse is less feeling, lively and experimental: yea many a time he hindereth the more edifying savoury discourse of others, by such religious discourse as is imprudent, impertinent, or turneth them away from the heart and life of the matter in hand. But especially his *opinions*, and *distinct manner of worship*, are the chief of his discourse,

3. And for the *seeming Christian*, though he can affectedly force his tongue to talk of any subject in religion, especially that which he thinks will most honour him in the esteem of the hearers; yet when he speaketh according to the inclination of his heart, his discourse is first about his fleshly interest and concernments, and next to that of the meer externals of religion, as controversies, parties, and the severall modes of worship.

XXXIX. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that so *liveth* upon the *great substantial matters of Religion*, as *yet not willingly to commit the smallest sin*, nor to own the smallest falsehood, nor to renounce or betray the smallest holy truth or duty, for any price that man can offer him. The works of *Repentance, Faith and Love* are his daily business, which take up his greatest care and diligence. Whatever opinions or controversies are a foot, his work is still the same: whatever changes come, his Religion

gion changeth not: He placeth not the King-dom of God in *meats*, and *drinks*, and circumstances, and ceremonies; either being *for* them or *against* them; but in *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*: *and he that in these things serveth Christ*; *as he is acceptable to God*, *so is he approved* by such a Christian as this, however factious persons may revile him. *Rom.* 14. 17, 18, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10. The *strong* Christian can *bear the infirmities of the weak*, and not take the course that most *pleaseth himself*, *but* that which *pleaseth his neighbour for his good to edification*. *Rom.* 15. 1, 2, 3. The essentials of Religion, Faith, and Love and obedience are as Bread and drink, the substance of his food: These he meditateth on, and these he practiseth, and according to these he esteemeth of others.

But yet no price can seem sufficient to him to buy his innocency: Nor will he *willfully sin*, and say it is a *little one*, nor *do evil that good may come by it*; nor *offer to God the sacrifice of* disobedient *fools*, and then say, I knew not that I did evil: For he knoweth that God will rather have *obedience* than *sacrifice*, and that *disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft*: And *he that breaketh one of the least commands and teacheth men so*, *shall be called Least in the Kingdom of God*: And he that teacheth men to sin by the example of his own practice, can little expect to turn them *from sin*, by his better instructions and exhortations. He that *will deliberately sin in a small matter*, doth set but a *small price* on the favour of God and his salvation. Willfull disobedience is odious to God, how small soever the matter be about which it is committed. Who can expect that he should stick at any sin, when his

temptation

mptation is great, who will *considerately* commit the least; especially if he will oppose and justifie it. Therefore the sound Christian will rather forsake his riches, his liberty, his reputation, his friends, and his country, than his conscience; and rather lay down libertie, and life it self, than choose to sin against his God; as knowing that never man gained by his sin: *Rom.* 3. 8. *Eccl.* 5. 2. 1 *Sam.* 15. 15, 21, 22, 23. *Mat.* 5. 19. The sin that *Saul* was rejected for seemed but a *little thing*; nor the sin that *Uzzah* was slain for: and the service of God, even his sacrifice and his ark were the pretence for both. The sin of the *Bethshemites*, of *Achan*, of *Gehezi*, of *Ananias* and *Saphira* which had grievous punishments, would seem but little things to us. And it is a great aggravation of our sin to be *chosen*, *deliberate*, *justified* and fathered upon God, and to pretend that we do it for his service, for the worshiping of him, or the doing good to others; as if God would own and bless sinful means, or needed a lie to his service or glory: When he hateth all the workers of iniquity, *Psal.* 5. 5. and requireth only the *sacrifices of righteousness*, *Psal.* 4. 5. He abhorreth sacrifice from polluted hands; they are to him as the offering a dog; and he will ask who hath required this at your hand: see *Psal.* 50. 8. 4. *Isa.* 1. 9, 10, 11, 12. *&c.* & 58. 1, 2, 3, 4. *&c. Jer.* 6. 19. 20. *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. *It is not pleasing to him: all that eat thereof shall be polluted*, Ho. 9. 4. See Isa. 66. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. The preaching, the praying, the sacraments of wilful sinners especially when they *choose sin as necessary to his service*, are a scorn and mockery put upon the most holy one; As if your servant should set dung and

carrion

cution before you, on your table for your food; ſuch offer Chriſt vinegar and gall to drink.

12. In all this the *weakeſt Chriſtian* that is *ſincere* is of the ſame mind; ſaving that in his ordinary courſe, he uſeth to place too much of his Religion in controverſies, and parties, and modes, and ceremonies, (whether being *for them or againſt them*,) and allow too great a proportion in his thoughts, and ſpeech, and zeal, and practice; and hindereth the growth of his grace, by living upon leſs edifying things, and turnning too much from the more ſubſtantial nutriment.

13. And the *ſeeming Chriſtians* are here of different wayes. One ſort of them place almoſt all their Religion in Phariſaical obſervation of *little, external, ceremonial* matters; as their waſhings, and faſtings, and tythings, and formalities, and the traditions of the Elders: Or in their ſeveral opinions, and wayes, and *parties*, which they call, *Being of the true Church*: As if *their ſect* were all the *Church*: But *living to God in faith and love*, and in a Heavenly converſation, and worſhipping him in *ſpirit and truth*, they are utterly unacquainted with. The other ſort are truly void of theſe eſſential parts of Chriſtianity, in the life and power, as well as the former: But yet being ſecretly reſolved, to take up no more of Chriſtianity than will conſiſt with their worldly proſperity and ends, when any ſin ſeemeth neceſſary to their preferment, or ſafety in the world, their way is to pretend their *high eſteem of greater matters*, for the ſwallowing of ſuch a ſin as an inconſiderable thing: And then they extol thoſe *larger ſouls* that live not upon circumſtantials, but upon the great and common truths and duties, and pitty thoſe men of *narrow principles*

ples and *spirits*, who by unneceſſary ſcrupuloſity make ſin of that which is no ſin, and expoſe themſelves to needleſs trouble. And they would make themſelves and others believe that it is their excellency and wiſdom, to be above ſuch trifling ſcruples: And all is becauſe, they never took God and Heaven for their All, and therefore are reſolved never to *loſe all* for the hopes of Heaven; and therefore to do that whatever it be, which their worldly intereſt ſhall require, and not to be of any religion that will undo them.

And three great pretences are effectual means in this their deceit. One is becauſe indeed, there are a ſort of perſons, that tythe mint and cummin, while they paſs by the greateſt matters of the Law; and that are cauſeleſly ſcrupulous, and make that to be ſin, which indeed is no ſin: And when ſuch a ſcrupulous people are noted by their weakneſs, and under diſhonour among wiſer men, the Hypocrite hath a very plauſible pretence for his hypocriſie, in ſeeming only to avoid this ignorant ſcrupuloſity, and taking all for ſuch who judge not his ſin to be a thing indifferent.

Another great ſhelter to the credit and conſcience of this Hypocrite is, the *Charity* of the beſt ſincereſt Chriſtians; who alwayes judge ridgedly of themſelves, and gently of others: They would rather die than willfully chooſe to commit the ſmalleſt ſin themſelves; but if they ſee *another* commit it, they judge as favourably of it as the caſe will bear, and hope that he did it not knowingly, or willfully: For they are bound to hope the beſt till the worſt be evident. This being the upright Chriſtians caſe, the hypocrite knoweth, that he ſhall ſtill have a place in the eſteem and love of thoſe

charitable Christians (whose integrity and moderation, maketh their judgements most valuable:) And then for the *judgement of God* he will venture on it; and for the censures of weaker persons, who themselves are censured by the best for their censoriousness, he can easily bear them.

And another covert for the hypocrite in this case is, the different judgements of learned and religious men, who make a *controversie* of the matter: And what duty or sin is there that is not become a controversie? Yea and among men otherwise well esteemed of (except in the essentials of religion.) And if once it be a *controversie*, whether it be a sin or not, the hypocrite can say, I am of the judgement of such and such good learned men: they are very judicious excellent persons; and we must not judge one another in controverted cases: though we differ in judgement, we must not differ in affection: And thus because he hath a shelter for his reputation from the censures of men, by the countenance of such as accompany him in his sin, he is as quiet as if he were secured from the censures of the Almighty.

XL. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one that highly *valueth time*: He abhorreth *Idleness*, and all diversions which would rob him of his Time, and hinder him from his work: He knoweth how much work he hath to do, and of what unspeakable consequence to his soul (if not also to others:) He knoweth that he hath a soul to save or lose, a heaven to win, a hell to escape, a death and judgement to prepare for, many a sin to mortifie, and many graces to get and exercise and increase, and many enemies and temptations to overcome, and

that

that he shall never have more time of trial; but what is now undone, must be undone for ever: He knoweth how short, and hasty time is, and also how uncertain; and how short many hundred years is to prepare for an everlasting state, if all were spent in greatest diligence: And therefore he wondereth at those miserable souls, that have time to spare, and wast in those fooleries which they call *pastimes*; even in stage-plaies, cards and dice, and long and tedious feastings, delights, complements, idleness, and overlong or needless visits, or recreations. He marvelleth at the distraction, or sottishness of those persons, that can play, and prate, and loyter, and feast away precious hours, as if their poor unprepared souls had nothing to do, while they stand at the very brink of a dreadful eternity; and are so fearfully unready as they are. He taketh that person who would cheat him of his time, by any of these forenamed baites, to be worse to him than a thief that would take his purse from him by the high way. O precious time! how highly doth he value it, when he thinks of his everlasting state, and thinks what hast his death is making, and what reckoning he must make for every moment: what abundance of work hath he for every hour, which he is grieved that he cannot do? He hath a calling to follow, and he hath a heart to search, and watch, and study; and a God to seek and faithfully serve; and many to do good to; and abundance of particular duties to perform, in order to every one of these; But alas time doth make such hast away, that many things are left undone, and he is afraid lest death will find him very much behind hand; And there-

fore he is up and doing, as one that hath uſe for every minute; and *worketh while it is day*, becauſe he knoweth that the *night is coming when none can work*: Joh. 9. 4. *Redeeming Time* is much of his wiſdom and his work: *Eph.* 5. 16. *Col.* 4. 5. He had rather labour in the houſe of correction, than live the ſwiniſh life of *idle and voluptuous Gentlemen*, or *Beggers*: that *live* to no higher end than to *live*, or to pleaſe their fleſh: or to live as worldlings, that loſe all their lives in the ſervice of a periſhing world. He knoweth how precious time will be ere long, in the eyes of thoſe that now make light of it, and trifle it away as a contemned thing, as if they had too much.

2. The *weak Chriſtian* is of the ſame mind in the main: But when it cometh to particular practice, he is like a weak or weary traveller, that goeth but *ſlowly*, and maketh many a ſtop: Though his face is ſtill Heaven-wards, he goeth but a little way in a day: He is too eaſily tempted to idle, or talk, or feaſt, or play away an hour unlawfully, ſo it be not his ordinary courſe, and he do it but ſeldome: He taketh not the loſs of an hour for ſo great a loſs as the *confirmed Chriſtian* doth: He could ſooner be perſwaded to live (though not an *idle* and *unprofitable*; yet) an *eaſier, leſs-profitable* life. The world and the fleſh have farr more of his hours, than they ought to have. Though his weakneſs tell him, that he hath moſt need of diligence.

3. But the *Time* of a *ſeeming Chriſtian* is moſt at the ſervice of his *fleſhly intereſt*: and for that it is principally employed: And *for that* he can Redeem it, and grudge if it be loſt. But as he liveth

liveth not to God, so he cannot redeem his time for God. He loseth it even when he seemeth to employ it best; when he is praying, or otherwise worshipping God, and doing that good which feedeth his false hopes, he is not *redeeming* his *time* in all this. While he is sleeping in security, and deluding his soul with a few formal words, and an image of Religion, and his time passeth on, and he is hurried away to the dreadful day, and his damnation slumbreth not. 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Pro.* 20 4. *Mat.* 25. 6, 7, 8.

XLI. 1. *A Christian indeed* is one whose very heart is set upon *doing good:* As one that is *made* to be profitable to *others*, according to his ability and place; even as the Sun is made to shine upon the world: he could not be content to *live idly*, or to *labour unprofitably*, or to get never so much to himself, and live in never so much plenty himself, unless he some way contribute to the good of others: Not that he grudgeth at the smallness of his talents, and lowness or obscurity of his place; for he knoweth that God may dispose his creatures and talents as he please; and that where much is given, much is required, *Mat.* 25. *Luk.* 12. 48. & 19. 23. But what his Lord hath entrusted him with, he is loth to hide, and willing to improve to his Masters use. He is so far from thinking that God is beholden to him for his good works, that he taketh it for one of his greatest mercies in the world, that God will *use* him in doing any good. And he would take it for a very great suffering to be deprived of such opportunities, or turned out of service, or called to less of that kind of duty. If he were a Physitian and denied liberty to practice, or a minister and

denied liberty to preach, it would far more trouble him that he is hindered from doing good, than that he is deprived of any profits, or honours, to himself. He doth not only comfort himself with the foresight of the reward, but in the very *doing of good* he findeth so much pleasure, as maketh him think it the delightfullest life in the world: And he looketh for most of his *receivings* from God, in a way of duty, *Joh.* 5. 29. *Gal.* 6. 10. *Heb.* 13. 16. 1 *Pet.* 3. 11,

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he have the same *disposition*, is far less profitable in the world: He is more for himself, and *less able* to do good to others: He wanteth either *parts*, or *prudence*, or *zeal*, or *strength*: Yea he is oft like the infants and sick persons of a family, that are not helpful, but troublesome to the rest: They find work for the stronger Christians, to bear their infirmities, and watch them, and support and help them: Indeed as an infant is a comfort to the mother, through the power of her own love, even when she endureth the trouble of its crying and uncleanness; so *weak Christians* are a comfort to charitable ministers and people; we are glad that they are alive; but sadded often by their distempers, *Rom.* 14. 1. & 15. 12.

3. The *seeming Christian* liveth to himself, and all his *good works* are done but *for himself*, to keep up his credit, or quiet his guilty conscience, and deceive himself with the false hopes of a reward, for that which his falseheartedness maketh to be his sin: If he be a man of learning and good parts, he may be very serviceable to the Church: But the thanks of that is due to God, and little to him; who seeketh himself more than God,

or

of the good of others, in all that he doth. *Mat.* 25, 24, 25, 26.

XLII. 1. *A Christian indeed doth truly love his neighbour as himself:* He is not all for his own commodity: His neighbours profit or good name is as his own: He feeleth himself hurt, when his neighbour is hurt: And if his neighbour prosper, he rejoyceth as if he prospered himself: Though his neighbour be not united to him, in the nearest bonds of Christianity, or Piety, yet he is not disregardfull of the *common Unity of Humanity. Love* is the very soul of life, *Lev.* 19. 18. *Mat.* 19. 19. & 22. 39. *Rom.* 13. 9. *Gal.* 5. 14. *Jam.* 2. 8. *Mark.* 10. 21. 1 *Joh.* 4. 10.

2. But the Love that is in *weaker Christians*, though it be *sincere*, is *weak* as they are; and mixed with too much selfishness; and with too much sowerness and wrath: *Little matters* cause differences and *fallings out*: When it cometh to MINE, and THINE, and their neighbours cross their interest or commodity, or stand in their way, when they are seeking any preferment or profit to themselves; you shall see too easily by their sowreness and contention, how weak their love is. *Mat.* 24. 12. 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. *Luke* 22. 24.

3. But in the *seeming Christian selfishness* is so predominant, that he loveth none but for *himself*, with any considerable love: All his kindness is from self-love; because men love him, or highly value him, or praise him, or have done him some good turn, or may do him good hereafter; or the like. If he hath any love to any for his own worth, yet *self-love* can turn all that to hatred, if they seem *against him*, or cross him in his way: For no man that is a *Lover* of the *world*, and *flesh*,

and carnall self, can ever be a true friend to any other. For he loveth them but for his own ends, and any croſs Intereſts will ſhew the falſhood of his love. 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4. *Mat.* 5. 46.

XLIII. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* hath a *ſpecial Love* to all the *Godly*; ſuch as endeareth his heart unto them: and ſuch as will enable him, to viſit them and relieve them in their wants, to his own loſs and hazzard, according to his ability and opportunity. For the image of God is beautifull and honourable in his eyes: He loveth not them ſo much as *God in them*; *Chriſt* in them; the *Holy Spirit* in them. He foreſeeth the day when he ſhall meet them in Heaven, and there rejoyce in God with them to Eternity. He loveth their company and converſe; and delighteth in their gracious words and lives: And the converſe of ungodly empty men, is a wearineſs to him (unleſs in a way of *duty*, or when he can do them good.) *In his eyes a vile perſon is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*, Pſal. 15. 4. Other men grieve his ſoul with their iniquities, while he is delighted with the appearances of God in his holy ones; even the excellent ones on earth, *Pſal.* 16. 3. 2 *Pet.* 2. 7, 8. Yea, the infirmities of Believers deſtroy not his Love; for he hath learned of God himſelf to difference between their abhorred frailties and their predominant Grace; and to love the very *Infants* in the Family of Chriſt. Yea, though they wrong him, or quarrel with him, or cenſure him in their weakneſs, he can honour their ſincerity, and love them ſtill: And if ſome of them prove ſcandalous, and ſome *ſeeming Chriſtians* fall away, or fall into the moſt odious crimes, he loveth Religion never the leſs; but

continueth

continueth as high an esteem of piety, and of all that are upright as he had before, 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 8, 20. *Joh.* 13. 34, 35. 1 *Thess.* 4. 9. 1 *Joh.* 3. 11, 14, 23. *Matth.* 25. 39, 40, *&c.*

2. The *weak Christian* sincerely loveth all that bear his Fathers image: But it is with a Love so weak (even when it is most passionate) as will sooner be abated or interrupted by any tempting differences: He is usually quarrelsome and froward with his Brethren; and apter to confine his love to those that are of his *own opinion* or *party*: And because God hath taught him to love all that are *sincere*; the Devil tempteth him to *censure* them as *not sincere*, that so he may *justifie* himself in the abatement of his love. And weak Christians are usually the most censorious, because they have the smallest degree of Love, which covereth faults, and thinketh no evil, and is not suspicious, but ever apt to judge the best, till the worst be evident, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5. *It beareth all things, believeth all things* (that are credible) *hopeth all things, endureth all things*, v. 7. But it is no wonder to see *children fall out*, even about their childish toyes and trifles: And what the dissentions of the *children* of the Church have done against themselves in these Kingdoms, I need not, I delight not to record. See 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. *And I brethren could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able: For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnall, and walk as men.*

3. The *seeming Christian* may have some love to

to reall Christians, even for their goodness sake: But it is a Love subservient to his carnal self-love: And therefore it shall not cost him much: As he hath some Love to Christ, so he may have some Love to *Christians*; but he hath *more* to the *world* and *fleshly* pleasures: And therefore all his Love to Christ or Christians, will not make him leave his worldly happiness for them. And therefore Christ at the day of Judgement will not enquire after empty barren love, but after that love which visited and relieved suffering Saints. An hypocrite can allow both Christ and Christians such a cheap superficial kind of love, as will cost him little: He will bid them lovingly, *Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled*, Jam. 2. 15, 16, 17. But still the World is *most beloved*.

XLIV. 1. *A Christian indeed doth love his enemies*, and *forgive* those that *injure him*, and this out of a thankfull sense of that grace which forgave him a farr greater debt: Not that he thinketh it unlawfull to make use of the Justice of the Government which he is under, for his necessary protection, or for the restraint of mens abuse and violence: Nor is he bound to love the *malice* or *injury*, though he must love the *man*: Nor can he forgive a *crime* as it is *against God* or the *common good*, or against *another*, though he can forgive an *injury* or *debt* that is his own: Nor is he bound to forgive *every debt*, though he is bound so farre to forgive every wrong as heartily to desire the good of him that did it. Even *Gods Enemies* he *so farre* loveth, as to desire God to convert and pardon them, while he hateth their *sin*, and *hateth them as Gods enemies*, and desireth their restraint, *Psal.* 139. 21, 22. & 101. 3. & 119. 4. & 68. 1. & 21. 8.

21. 8. But those that *hate*, and *curse*, and *persecute himself*, he can unfeignedly *love*, and *bless*, and *pray for*, Matth. 5. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. For he knoweth that else he cannot be a *child of God*, v. 45. And that to *love those that love him* is not much praise-worthy, being no more than Heathens and wicked men can do: *v.* 46, 47. He is so deeply sensible of that wondrous love, which so dearly redeemed him, and saved him from Hell, and forgave him a thousandfold worse than the worst that ever was done against himself, that *Thankfulness* and *Imitation*, or *Conformity* to Christ in his great compassions, do overcome his desires of revenge, and make him willing to do good to his most cruel enemies; and pray for them as *Christ* and *Stephen* did at their deaths, *Luk.* 23. 34. *Acts* 7. 60. And he knoweth that he is so inconsiderable a worm, that a wrong done to him as *such*, is the less considerable: And he knoweth that he daily wrongeth God more than any man can wrong him, and that he can hope for pardon but on condition that he himself forgive, *Matth.* 6. 12, 14, 15. & 18. 34, 35. And that he is far more hurtfull to himself, than any other can be to him.

2. And the *weakest Christian* can truely *love an enemy*, and *forgive a wrong*; but he doth it not so *easily* and so *fully* as the other. But it is with much striving, and some unwillingness and averseness; and there remaineth some grudge or strangeness upon the minde: He doth not sufficiently *forget* the wrong which he doth *forgive*. Indeed his *forgiving* is very imperfect like himself, *Matth.* 18. 21. *Luk.* 9. 54, 55. not with that freeness and readiness required, *Eph.* 4. 2. *With all lowliness and*

and meekneſs, with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love, Col. 3. 12, 13. *Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of minde, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye,* Rom. 12. 14, 19. *Avenge not your ſelves,* &c.

3. As for the *ſeeming Chriſtian,* he can *ſeem* to *forgive wrongs* for the ſake of Chriſt, but if he do it indeed it is for his own ſake: As becauſe it is for his *honour,* or becauſe the perſon hath humbled himſelf to him, or his commodity requireth it, or he can make uſe of his love and ſervice for his advantage, or ſome one hath interpoſed for reconciliation who muſt not be denyed, or the like: But to love an enemy indeed, and to love that man (be he never ſo good) who ſtandeth in the way of his preferment, honour or commodity in the world, he never doth it from his heart, whatever he may ſeem to doe, *Matth.* 6. 14, 15. & 18. 27, 30, 32. The Love of Chriſt doth not conſtrain him.

XLV. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* is as preciſe in the *Juſtice* of his dealings with men, as in acts of piety to God. For he knoweth that God requireth this as ſtrictly at his hands, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 6. *That no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter; for the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch, as we alſo have forewarned and teſtified.* He is one that *walketh uprightly, and worketh righteouſneſs, and ſpeaketh the truth in his heart; that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour. If he ſweare to his own hurt, he changeth not: He putteth not out his money to* (unjuſt or unmercifull) *Uſury;*

no

nor taketh reward against the innocent, Psal. 15. He obeyeth that, *Lev.* 19. 13. *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him, the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night untill the morning.* He can say as *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. *Whose Oxe or Asse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blinde mine eyes therewith, and I will restore it? And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any mans hand.* And if heretofore he was ever guilty of defrauding any, he is willing to his power to make restitution; and saith as *Zacheus*, Luk. 19. 8. *If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.* Though flesh and blood perswade him to the contrary, and though it leave him in want, he will pay his debts, and make restitution of that which is ill gotten, as being none of his own. He will not sell for as much as he can get, but for as much as it is truly worth: He will not take advantage of the weakness, or ignorance, or necessity of his neighbour: He knoweth that *a false ballance is abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is his delight*, Prov. 11. 1. He is afraid of believing ill reports, and rebuketh the backbiter, *Prov.* 25. 23. He is apt to take part with any man behind his back, who is not notoriously inexcusable; not to justifie any evil; but to shew his charity, and his hatred of evil speaking, especially where it can do no good. He will not believe evil of another till the evidence do compell him to believe it. If he have wronged any by incautelous words, he readily confesseth his fault to him, and asketh him forgiveness, and is ready to make any just

satisfaction

satisfaction for any wrong that he hath done. He *borroweth not* when he seeth not a great probability that he is like to pay it: Nor will remain in debt by retaining that which is another mans against his will, without an absolute necessity. *Rom.* 13. 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* For to borrow when he cannot pay is but to steal. *Begging* is better than *borrowing* for such. Psal. 37. 21. *The wicked borroweth and payeth not.*

2. And the *weak Christian* maketh conscience of *Justice* as well as acts of piety, as knowing that God hath no need of our Sacrifices, but loveth to see us do that which is good for humane society, and which we have need of from each other. But yet he hath more *selfishness* and *partiality* than the confirmed Christian hath, and therefore is often overcome by temptations to unrighteous things: As to stretch his Conscience for his commodity, in buying or selling, and concealing the faults of what he selleth, and sometimes overreaching others: Especially he is ordinarily too censorious of others, and apt to be credulous of evil reports, and to be overbold and forward in speaking ill of men behind their backs, and without a call: especially against persons that differ from him in matters of Religion, where he is usually most unjust and apt to go beyond his bounds. *Jam.* 3. 15, 16. *Tit.* 3. 2. *Eph.* 4. 31. 1 *Pet.* 2. 1.

3. The *seeming Christian* may have a *seeming Justice.* But really he hath none but what must give place to his fleshly interest; and if his honour and commodity and safety require it, he will not stick to be unjust. And that Justice which wanteth

th but a ſtrong temptation to overturn it, is almoſt as bad as none. If he will not ſeize on *Naboths* Vineyard, nor make himſelf odious by oppreſſion or deceit; yet if he can raiſe or enrich himſelf by *ſecret conſtruage*, and get ſo fair a pretence for his injuſtice, as ſhall cloak the matter from the ſight of men; he ſeldom ſticketh at it. It is an eaſie matter to make an *Achan* think that he doth no harm; or a *Gehazi* think that he wrongeth no man, in taking that which was *offered* and *due*. Covetouſneſs will not confeſs its name; but will find ſome Reaſonings to make good all the injuſtice which it doth, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. *Prov.* 5. 19, 20.

XLVII. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* is faithfull and *laborious* in his *particular calling*, and that not out of a covetous minde; but in obedience to God, and that he may maintain his Family, and be able to do good to others. For God hath ſaid, *In the ſweat of thy face thou ſhalt eat thy bread*, Gen. 3. 19. *And ſix dayes ſhalt thou labour*, Exod. 20. 10. And with *quietneſs* men muſt *work*, *and eat their own bread*; and *if any will not work*, *neither ſhould he eat*, 2 Theſſ. 3. 10, 11, 12. *Abraham* and *Noah* and *Adam* laboured in a conſtant courſe of imployment. He knoweth that a ſanctified calling and labour is a help, and not a hinderance to devotion; and that the body muſt have work as well as the ſoul, and that Religion muſt not be pretended for ſlothfull idleneſs, nor againſt obedience to our Maſters will, *Prov.* 31.

2. The *weak Chriſtian* is here more eaſily deceived, and made believe that Religion will excuſe a man from bodily labour: and under the colour of devotion to live idly. 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 8. 1 *Tim.* 5. 13.

They

They learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tatlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. Slothfulness is a sin much condemned in the Scriptures, *Ezek.* 16. 49. *Prov.* 24. 30. & 18. 9. & 21. 25. *Mat.* 25. 26. *Rom.* 12. 11.

3. The *seeming Christian* in his labour is ruled chiefly by his flesh: If he be rich, and it incline him most to sloth, he maketh small conscience of living in idleness, under the pretence of his Gentility or wealth: But if the flesh incline him more to *Covetousness*, he will be *laborious* enough; but it shall not be to please God by obedience, but to increase his Estate, and enrich himself and his Posterity (whatever better reason he pretend.)

XLVII. 1. *A Christian indeed* is exactly *conscionable* in the *duties of his relation to others* in the family and place of his abode: If he be a husband, he is loving and patient and faithfull to his wife: If he be a father, he is carefull of the holy education of his children: If he be a Master, he is just and mercifull to his servants, and carefull for the saving of their souls. If he be a *childe* or *servant*, he is obedient, trusty, diligent and carefull, as well behind his Parents or his Masters back, as before his face. He dare not lie, nor steal, nor deceive, nor neglect his duty, nor speak dishonourably of his Superiors, though he were sure he could conceal it all. For he knoweth that the fifth Commandement is enforced with a special Promise, *Eph.* 6. 2, 3. 9. And that a bad Childe or a bad Servant, a bad Husband or Wife, a bad Parent or Master cannot be a good Christian, *Col.* 3. 18, 19, &c. 4. 1. 1 *Pet.* 2. 18.

2. But *weak Christians* (though sincere) are ordinarily

ordinarily weak in this part of their duty; and apt to yield to temptations, and carry themselves proudly, stubbornly, idly, disobediently, as *eye-servants* that are good in sight; or to be unmerciful to inferiours and neglecters of their souls: And so excuse all this from the faults of those that they have to do with, and lay all upon others; as if the fault of husband, wife, parent, master or servant would justifie them in theirs; and *passion* and *partiality* would serve for innocency.

3. And the *Hypocrite ordinarily* sheweth his hypocrisie, by being false in his relations to man, while he pretendeth to be pious and obedient unto God. He is a bad master, and a bad servant, when his filthy interest requireth it, and yet thinketh himself a good Christian for all that. For all men being faulty, it is easie to find a pretence from all men that he doth abuse, to cover the injury of his sin. *Cain, Cham, Eli, Absalom, Judas, &c.* are all examples of this.

XLVIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* is the *best subject*, whether his Prince be *good* or *bad*: Though an infidel and *ungodly Rulers* he be oft mistaken for the *worst*. He obeyeth not his Rulers only for his *ends*; but in *obedience to God*, and not only for fear of punishment, but for *conscience sake*. He looketh on them in their relations as the *Officers* of God, and armed with his authority, and therefore obeyeth God in them. He permitteth not dishonourable thoughts of them in his heart, much less dare he speak dishonourably of them, *Exod.* 22. 28. *Prov.* 24. 21. 1 *Pet.* 2, 13, 17. *Prov.* 8. 15. *Act.* 23. 4, 5. *Eccles.* 10. 4, 20. He knoweth that *every soul* must *be subject to the higher powers, and not resist*; and that *there is no power but of God: Whosoever therefore re-*

sisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and he that resisteth shall receive to himself damnation. Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Therefore in all things lawfull he obeyeth them; and though he must not, nor will not obey them *against God*, yet will he suffer patiently when he is wronged by them; and not only forbear resistance by arms or violence, but also all reproachfull words; as knowing that the righting of himself is not so necessary to the publick order and good, as the honour of his Rulers is. *Usurpers* may probably charge him to be a Traitor, and seditious and rebellious, because he dare not approve of their Usurpations; and when several are contending for the Government, and in a litigious Title the Lawyers mislead him, when the controversie is only *among them*, and belongs to *their profession*, its possible he may mistake as well as the Lawyers, and take him to have the better Title that hath the worse: But in *Divinity* he knoweth there is no controversie whether *every soul must be subject to the highest power*, so far as he can know it: And that prayers and patience are the Subjects arms; and Religion is so far from being a warrant to resist, that it plainly forbiddeth disobedience and resistance: and none are more obliged to submission and quietness than Christians are: The spirit of Christianity is not of this world; Their Kingdom and their Hopes are not of this world: And therefore they contend not for dignities and rule; much less by resisting or rebelling against their lawfull Governours. But they are resolved to obey God, and secure their everlasting portion, and bear all the injuries which they meet with in the way; especially from those whom God hath set over them. There is no Doctrine that ever

was

was received in the world, so far from befriending seditions and rebellion as the Doctrine of Christ; nor any people in the world so loyal as Christians, while Christianity retained its genuine simplicity; till proud, domineering, worldly men for carnal ends pretended themselves to be Christians, and perverted the Doctrine of Christ, to make it warp to their ambitious ends; suffering seemeth not so great a matter to a holy, mortified, heavenly mind, as to tempt him to hazard his salvation to resist it. No man is so likely to be true to Kings, as he that believeth that his salvation lieth on it, by the ordinance of God, *Rom.* 13. 3. And Princes that are wise and just do alwaies discern that the best Christians are their best subjects: Though those that are *unbelieving* and *ungodly* themselves, have ever hated them as the greatest troublers of the Earth. And it hath ever been the practice of the Enemies of *Christ* and *Godliness*, to do all they can to engage the Rulers of the Earth against them; and to perswade them that the most *godly Christians* are persons of disloyal and unquiet minds; and by vexing and persecuting them, they do their worst to *make* them such as they falsly *called* them: Even Christ himself was crucified as an enemy to *Cæsar*, and *Pilate* driven to it by the noise of them that cryed out, that if he *let them go*, he *was not Cæsars friend*, Joh. 19. 12. They first tempted him with the question, *whether it were lawfull to give tribute unto Cæsar*, Matth. 22. 17. Luke 20. 22. And though they could this way take no hold of him, yet this was the first article of his accusation, *Luke* 23. 2. *we have found this fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar.* And how loyal would those rebellious Jews seem, when they

thought it the only way to engage the *Roman Power* against Christ? Then they cry out, *We have no King but Cæsar*, Joh. 19. 15. And this was the common accusation against the Christians both by Jews and Gentiles: The language of the Jews you may hear from *Tertullus*, *Acts* 24. 5. *We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarens.* And at *Thessalonica*, *Acts* 17. 6, 7. the charge against them was, that they *turned the world upside down, and did all contrary to the decrees of Cæsar.* And thus the best Christians have by such been slandered from age to age: because the Devil and his instruments know not how sufficiently to molest them, except they engage the Rulers against them. But yet all this doth not conquer the patience and loyalty of confirmed Christians. They are wiser than that *wise man* that *Solomon* saith, *Oppression maketh mad*, *Eccles.* 7. 7. If usurpers or malicious lyars shall a thousand times call them rebellious and seditious, it shall not drive them from their due subjection: They can patiently follow their Lord and the ancient Christians, in the enduring of such slanders, and suffering as enemies to *Cæsar*, so they do but escape the sin, and be not such as malice calleth them. They had rather die as reputed enemies to Government, than to be such indeed. They prefer *subjection* before the *reputation* of it; For they look not for their reward from Princes, but from God. If they can preserve their *innocency*, they can beat the defamation of their names, being satisfied in the hopes of the joyfull day of the Judgement of Christ, which will fully justifie them, and set all strait. Indeed they know that a state of *subjection*

jection is easier and safer than places of command; and that it is easier to *obey* than *govern*. And so far are they from envying mens greatness, and from desiring dominions, that they pity the tempted, and dangerous, and troublesome state of those in power, and are thankful to God for their quieter and safer station. They heartily pray for *Kings*, and all that are in *Authority*; not that by their favour they may rise to places of wealth and honour; but *that under them they may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty*, 1 Tim. 2. 2. Yea, though Infidel Princes hate and persecute them, they continue to pray for them, and to honour their authority, and will not thereby be driven from their duty. If God cast their lot under Infidel, ungodly and malicious Governours, they do not run to arms, to save themselves, or save the Gospel, as if God had *called them* to reform the world, or keep it from the oppression of the higher powers: Nor do they think it a strange intollerable matter for the best men to be lowest, and to be the suffering side; and so fall to fighting that Christ and the Saints may have the rule. For they know that Christs *Kingdom is not of this world*, Joh. 18. 36. (that is, *not a visible Monarchy*, as his usurping Vicar doth pretend;) and that Christ doth most eminently rule unseen, and disposeth of all the Kingdoms of the world, even where he is hated and resisted: and that the reign of Saints is in their state of glory: and that all Gods graces do fit them more for a suffering life, than for worldly power: Their humility, meekness, patience, self-denyal, contempt of the world, and heavenly mindedness, are better exercised and promoted in a *suffering*, than a *prosperous reigning* state, When they

think of the holy blood which hath been ſhed by Heathen *Rome*, from Chriſt and *Stephen* till the daies of *Conſtantine*; and the far greater ſtreams which have been ſhed by the bloody Papal *Rome*, where-ever they had power, in *Piedmont*, *Germany*, *Poland*, *Hungary*, in *Belgia*, *England*, and in other Lands; the 30000, or 40000 murdered in a few daies at the *Bartholomew* Maſſacre in *France*; the two hundred thouſand murdered in a few weeks in *Ireland*; they are not ſo unlike their ſuffering Brethren, as to think that ſtriving for honours and command, is *their* way to Heaven: When Chriſt hath foretold them that *ſelf-denyal* under the Croſs, *tribulation* and *perſecution*, is the common way, *Luk.* 14. 26, 27, 29, 33. *Acts* 14. 22. *Job.* 16. 33. *Rom.* 5. 3. & 8. 35. 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 6, 7, 10. *Mark* 10. 30. So far are they from fighting againſt the injuries and cruelties of their Governours, that they account the *reproach* of Chriſt to be greater *riches* than all their treaſures, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. and think they are *bleſſed* when they are *perſecuted*, *Matth.* 5. 10. and ſay with *Paul*, *God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world*, Gal. 6. 14. And 2 *Cor.* 12. 19. *Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake; for when I am weak, then I am ſtrong*, Rom. 8. 35, 36, 37. *Nay in all theſe things* (when *perſecuted* and *killed all the day long*, and *counted as ſheep to the ſlaughter*) they *are more than Conquerours through Chriſt*; They obtain a nobler conqueſt than that which is obtained by the ſword.

2. But the *weak Chriſtian* having *leſs patience*, and

and *more* selfishness and *passion*, is easilier tempted to break his bounds, and with *Peter*, to run to his unauthorized sword, when he should submit to suffering, *Matth.* 26. 51, 52. And his *interest* and *sufferings* cause his passion to have too great a power on his Judgement; so that he is easilier tempted to believe that to be *lawfull*, which he thinks to be *necessary* to his *own preservation*: and to think that the Gospel and the Church are falling, when the power of men is turned against them; and therefore he must with *Uzzah*, put forth his hand to save the Ark of God from falling. He is more troubled at mens *injustice* and *cruelty*, and maketh a wonder of it to find the enemies of Christ and Godliness, to be unreasonably impudent and bloody; as if he expected reason and righteousness in the malicious world. His sufferings fill him more with discontent, and desires of revenge from God, *Luke* 9. 54. and his prosperity too much lifts him up, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. And in the litigious titles of pretenders to supremacy, he is oft too hasty to interess himself in their contentions; as if he understood not, that whoever is the conquerour, will count those rebels that were on the other side; and that the enemies of Christ will cast all the *odium* upon Christianity and piety, when the controversie is only among the Statesmen and Lawyers, and belongs not to Religion at all.

3. The *seeming Christian* will *seem* to excel all others in loyalty and obedience, when it maketh for his carnal ends: He will flatter Rulers for honours and preferment, and alwaies be on the rising side, unless when his pride engageth him in murmurings and rebellions. He hath a great advantage

above true Christians and honest men, to seem the most obedient subject; because he hath a stretching conscience that can do any thing for his safety, or his worldly ends: If he be among Papists, he can be a Papist; if among Protestants, he is a Protestant; and if he were among Turks, its like he would rather turn a Mahometan than be undone. No Prince or Power can command him any thing which he cannot yield to, if his worldly interest require it. If there be a Law for worshipping the golden Image, it is the conscionable servants of God, and not the time-servers, that refuse to obey it, *Dan.* 3. If there be a Law against praying, *Dan.* 6. it is *Daniel* and not the ungodly multitude that disobey it. If there be a command against preaching, *Acts* 4. 17, 18. it is the holy Apostles and best Christians that plead the command of God against it, and refuse obedience to it, *vers.* 20, 29. The self-seeking temporizing hypocrite can do any thing: And yet he *obeyeth* not while he *seemeth* to obey. For it is not for the Authority of the Commander that he doth it, but for his own ends. He never truly honoureth his superiours: for he doth not respect them as the Officers of God, nor obey them for his sake with a conscionable obedience. He feareth the Higher Powers as Bears or Tygers that are able to hurt him; or useth their favour, as he useth his horse to do him service. Were it not for *himself*, he would little regard them. The true Christian honoureth the basest creature, more than the hypocrite and worldling honoureth his King. For he seeth God in all, and useth the smallest things unto his glory: Whereas the worldling debaseth the highest, by the baseness of his esteem, and use, and end; For he

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knoweth not how to esteem or use the greatest Prince, but for *himself* or for some *worldly* ends, 2 Tim. 3. 3, 4.

XLIX. 1. *A Christian indeed*, is a man of *courage* and *fortitude* in every cause of God. For he *trusteth God*, and firmly believeth that he will bear him out. He knoweth his superiours, and hath a *charitable respect* to *all men*; but as for any *selfish* or *timerous respect*, he hath the least regard to *man*. For he knoweth that the greatest are but *worms*; whose breath is in their nostrils; that pass away as shadows and return to dust; and that the most potent are impotent when they contend with God; and are unequal matches to strive against their maker: and that it will prove hard for them to kick against the pricks; and that whoever seemeth now to have the day, it is God that will be Conquerour at last. Job 25. 6. & 17. 14. & 24. 20. Psal. 79. 31. & 103. 16. & 144. 4. Act. 9. 4, 5, 6. Psal. 144. 3, 4, 5. *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help: his breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth: in that very day, his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God*, Isa. 45. 9. *Wo to him that striveth with his maker.* He knoweth that it is more irrational to fear man against God, than to fear a flea or a fly against the greatest man. The infinite disproportion between the *creature* that is against him, and the *Creator* that is for him, doth resolve him to obey the command of Christ, Luk. 12. 4. *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast*

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into hell: yea I say unto you fear him. Isa. 57. 7, 8. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law: Fear ye not the reproof of man, neither be afraid of their revilings: for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my Salvation from generation to generation. Isa. 50. 6, 7, 8, 9. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me: therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint; and I know that I shall not be ashamed: He is neer that justifieth me; who will contend with me: Let us stand together who is mine adversary: let him come neer to me: Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me; Loe, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up. Isa. 35. 4. & 41. 10, 13, 14. & 7. 4. Jer. 46. 27, 28. Mat. 10. 26, 31. Isa. 2. 22. Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of. Jer. 17. 5, 8, 9. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, &c. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, &c. Alas how terrible is the wrath of God, in comparison of the wrath of man! and how easie an enemy is the cruellest afflicter, in comparison of a holy sin-revenging God. Therefore the confirmed Christian saith as the three witnesses, Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18. We are not carefull to answer thee in this matter: the God whom we serve is able to deliver us —— But if not, be it known unto thee O King that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Dan. 6. 10. When Daniel knew that the Decree was past, he

he prayed openly in his house, as heretofore, Heb. 11. 27. Moses, *feared not the wrath of the King, for he endured as seeing him that is invisible*, Prov. 28. 1. *The righteous is bold as a Lion*: Act. 4 13. *when they saw the boldness of* Peter *and* John *they marvelled*. 2 Cor. 11. 21. Pauls bonds made others *bold*, Eph. 6. 19, 20. Act. 4. 29, 31. 1 Joh. 4. 18. *Perfect love casteth out fear*: 1 Pet. 3. 14. *If ye suffer for righteousness sake happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terrour, neither be troubled*. Heb. 13. 6. *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me*.

2. But the *weak Christian*, though he also *trust* in God, is much more *fearful*, and easily daunted and discouraged: and ready with *Peter* to be afraid, if he perceive himself in danger: *Matth.* 26. 69. He is not *valiant for the truth*, Jer. 9. 3. Though he can forsake all (even life it self) for Christ (*Luk.* 14. 26, 33.) yet is it with a deal of fear and trouble: And *Man* is a more significant thing to him than to the stronger Christian.

3. But the *seeming Christian* doth fear man more than God, and will venture upon the displeasure of God to avoid the displeasure of men that can do him hurt: because he doth not soundly believe the threatnings of the word of God.

L. 1. *A Christian indeed* is made up of *Judgement* and *Zeal* conjunct. His *Judgement* is not a patron of Lukewarmness, nor his *Zeal* an enemy to *knowledge*: His judgement doth not *destroy* but *increase* his *Zeal*: and his *Zeal* is not *blind* nor *self-conceited*, nor doth run before or without judgement. If he be of the *most excellent sort* of Christians, he hath so large a knowledge of the mysteries of godliness, that he seeth the body of sacred truth with its

its parts and compages or joynts, as it were at once, It is all written deeply and methodically in his understanding: He hath by long use his senses exercised to discern both good and evil, *Heb.* 5. 14. He presently discerneth where mistaken men go out of the way, and lose the truth by false suppositions, or by false definitions, or by confounding things that differ. And therefore he pittyeth the contentious sects and disputers who raise a dust to blind themselves and others, and make a stir to the trouble of the Church, about things which they never understood: And in the sight of that truth which others obscure or contradict, he enjoyeth much content or pleasure in his own mind, though uncapable persons zealously reject it. Therefore he is *stedfast*, as knowing on what ground he seteth his foot. And though he be the greatest lover of truth, and would with greatest joy receive any addition to his knowledge, yet ordinarily by erroneous zealots, he is censured as too stiff and self-conceited and tenacious of his own opinions; because he will not entertain their errours and obey them in their self-conceitedness: For he that *knoweth* that it is *truth* which he holdeth, is neither able nor willing to hold the contrary (unless he imprison the truth in unrighteousness) But if he be one that hath not attained to such a clear comprehensive judgement, yet with that measure of judgement which he hath, he doth *guide* and *regulate* his *zeal*; and maketh it follow after, while understanding goeth before. He treadeth on sure ground, and knoweth it to be *duty* indeed which he is *zealous* for, and *sin* indeed which he is zealous against; and is not put to excuse all his fervour and forwardness after with a *non putavem*, or

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I had thought it had been otherwise, 1 Cor. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 8. 7. Col. 3. 16. & 4. 12.

2. But the *weak Christian* either hearkeneth too much to carnal wisdom, which suppresseth his zeal, and maketh him too heavy and dull and indifferent in many of his duties, and the concernments of his soul; permitting the world to take up too much of the vigour of his spirit; Or else he is *confident* in his mistakes, and verily thinks that he understandeth better than many wiser men, these things which he never understood at all. He chooseth his party by the *Zeal* that he findeth in them without any judicious tryal of the truth of what they hold and teach: He is very earnest for many a supposed truth and duty, which proveth at last to be no truth or duty at all: And he censureth many a wiser Christian than himself, for many a supposed *sin* which is *no sin*, but perhaps a *duty*. For he is alwayes injudicious, and his *heat* is greater than his *light* (or else his light is too flashy without heat:) Peremptorily he doth set down some among the number of the most wise and excellent men, for keeping him company in his mistakes: And he boldly numbreth the best and wisest of his Teachers with the transgressors, for being of a sounder understanding than himself, and doing those *duties* which he calleth sins: And hence it is that he is a person apt to be mislead, by appearances of Zeal; and the *Passions* of his Teachers prevail more with him than the Evidence of Truth. He that prayeth and Preacheth most *fervently* is the man that carryeth him away, though none of his Arguments be truly cogent. If he hear any *hard name* against any *opinion* or manner of worship, he receiveth that prejudice which turneth

eth him more againſt it, than *reaſon* could have done: ſo the bug-bear name of *Hereſie*, *Lutheraniſm* and *Calviniſm* frightneth many a well-meaning Papiſt both from the *Truth* and almoſt from his wits: And the *names* of *Popery*, *Arminianiſm*, Prelacy, Presbyterianiſm, Independancy, *&c.* do turn away the hearts of many, from things which they never *tryed* or underſtood: If a zealous Preacher do but call any opinion or practice *Antichriſtian*, or *Idolatrous*, it is a more effectual terrour than the cleareſt proof. Big and terrible words do move the *paſſions*, while the underſtanding is abuſed, or a ſtranger to the cauſe; And Paſſion is much of their Religion. And hence, alas, is much of the calamity of the Church: *Rom.* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, *&c.* 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Act.* 21. 20. *Gal.* 4. 17, 18.

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* is only *zealous finally* for *Himſelf*, or zealous about the ſmaller matters of Religion, as the Phariſees were for their Ceremonies and traditions; or for his own inventions, or ſome opinions or wayes, in which his honour ſeemeth to be intereſſed, and *pride* is the bellows of his zeal: But as for a holy zeal about the ſubſtance and practice of Religion, and that *for God* as the *final* cauſe, he is a ſtranger to it. He may have a *zeal of God*, and *of*, and *for* the *Law* and *Worſhip* of God as the *material cauſe*, but not a true zeal *for God* as the chief final cauſe. *Rom.* 10. 2. 2 *Sam.* 21. 2. 2 *King.* 10. 16. *Act.* 22. 3.

LI. A *Chriſtian indeed* can *bear the infirmities* of the *weak*: Though he *love not* their weakneſs, yet he *pitty eth* it becauſe he truly *lov eth* their *perſons*. Chriſt hath taught him not to *break* the *bruiſed reed*, and *to gather the Lambs in his arms, and carry them in his boſome, and gently lead*

them

them that are with young, Isa. 40. 11. & 42. 3. If they have diseases and distempers, he seeketh in tenderness to cure them, and not in wrath to hurt and vex them. He turneth not the Infants or sick persons from the family, because they cry or are unquiet, unclean, infirm and troublesome: but he exerciseth his love and pitty upon their weaknesses. If they mistake their way, or are ignorant, and peevish and froward in their mistakes, he seeketh not to undoe them, but gently to reduce them. If they *censure* himself, and call him erroneous, heretical, antichristian, idolatrous, because he concurreth not with them in their mistakes, he beareth it with Love and patience, as he would do the peevish chidings of a child, or the frowardness of the sick. He doth not lose his charity, and set his wit against a Child, and aggravate the crimes, and being reviled, revile again; and say, you are Schismaticks, hypocrites, obstinate, and fit to be severely dealt with: but he overcometh them with love and patience, which is the conquest of a Saint, and the happiest victory both for himself and them. It is *a small matter to him to be judged of man*, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. He is more troubled for the *weakness* and *disease* of the censorious, than for his *own* being *wronged* by their censures, *Phil.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *Rom.* 15. 1, 2, 3. & 14. 2, 3.

2. But the *weak Christian* is readier to *censure* others than patiently to bear a censure himself. Either he stormeth against the Censurers as if they did him some unsufferable wrong, (through the over-great esteem of himself and his reputation;) or else to escape the fangs of censure, and keep up his repute with them, he complyeth with

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the cenſorious, and overruns his judgement and conſcience to be well ſpoken of, and counted a ſincere and ſtedfaſt man, *Gal.* 2. 12, 13, 14.

3. But the *ſeeming Chriſtian* is ſo proud and ſelfiſh, and wanteth Charity and tenderneſs to the weak, that he is impatient of their provocations, and would cure the diſeaſes of the ſervants of Chriſt, by cutting their throats, or ridding the Countrey of them. If a Child do but wrangle with him, he cryeth, Away with him, he is a troubler of the World: He taketh more notice of one of their infirmities, than of all their graces: yea he can ſee nothing but obſtinacy and hypocriſie in them, if they do but croſs him in his opinions, or reputation, or worldly ends. Selfiſhneſs can turn his *Hypocriſie* into *Malignity* and cruelty, if once he take them to be againſt his intereſt. Indeed his *intereſt* can make him patient: He can bear *with* them that he looketh to gain by: but not with them that ſeem to be againſt him. The radical enmity againſt ſincerity that was not *mortified* but *covered* in his heart will eaſily be again uncovered, *Mark.* 6. 18, 20, 21, 22. *Phil.* 1. 15, 16. *Job.* 9. 3.

EFF. 1. *A Chriſtian indeed* is a *great eſteemer of the Unity of the Church, and greatly averſe to all Diviſions among Believers.* As there is in the natural body an abhorring of diſmembring or ſeparating any part from the whole; ſo there is in the myſtical body of Chriſt: The members that have *life* cannot but *feel* the ſmart of any diſtempering attempt: For abciſion is deſtruction: The members die that are *ſeparated* from the body. And if there be but any *obſtruction* or *hinderance* of *communion*, they will be painfull or unuſefull. He *faileth* in himſelf

ſelf the reaſon of all thoſe ſtrict commands, and earneſt exhortations, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Now I beſeech you Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions among you; but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgement*, Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. *If there be any conſolation in Chriſt, if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the ſame Love, being of one accord, of one mind: Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain glory; but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves. Look not every man on his own things; but every man alſo on the things of others*, Epheſ. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *I therefore the priſoner of the Lord beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowlineſs and meekneſs, with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one ſpirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all: But unto every one of us is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt.* Read alſo *Epheſ.* 4. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. 1 *Cor.* 12. throughout. He looketh at uncharitableneſs, and diviſions with more abhorrence, than *weak Chriſtians* do at drunkenneſs or whoredom, or ſuch other hainous ſin. He feareth ſuch dreadfull warnings, as *Acts* 20. 29, 30. *For I know this, that after my departing ſhall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flock: Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe ſpeaking*

perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. And he cannot slight such a vehement exhortation, as *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. *Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* Therefore he is so far from being a *divider himself*, that when he seeth any one making *divisions* among Christians, he looketh on him as on one that is slashing and mangling the body of his dearest friend; or as on one that is setting fire on his house, and therefore doth all that he can to quench it: As knowing the confusion and calamity to which it tendeth. He is of a *Christian*, and therefore of a truly *Catholick* spirit; that is, He maketh not himself a member of a divided *Party* or a *Sect*: He regardeth the interest and welfare of the *body*, the universal Church, above the interest or prosperity of any party whatsoever: And he will do nothing for a *party* which is injurious to the *whole*, or to the Christian cause. The very names of *Sects* and *Parties* are displeasing to him; And he could wish that there were no name but that of *Christians* among us; save only the necessary names of the criminal, such as that of the *Nicolaitans*, *Rev.* 2. 6. 15. By which those that are to be avoided by Christians must be known. Christianity is confined to so narrow a compass in the world, that he is unwilling to contract it yet into a narrower. The greatest *party* of *divided* Christians, whether it be the *Greeks* or *Papists*, is too *small* a body for him to take for the Catholick (or Universal) Church: He admireth at the blindness

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and cruelty of faction, that can make men damn all the rest of the Church, for the interest of their proper sect; and take all those as *no Christians* that are better Christians than themselves. Especially the Papists, who unchurch all the Church of Christ, except their *Sect*; and make it as necessary to salvation to be a subject of the Pope as to be a Christian; and when by their great corruption and abuses of Christianity, they have more need of *charitable* censures themselves than almost any sort of Christians, yet are they the boldest condemners of all others. The *confirmed Christian* can difference between the strong and weak, the sound and unsound members of the Church, without dismembring any, and without unwarrantable separations from any. He will worship God in the purest manner he can; and locally joyn with those Assemblies, where all things considered, he may most honour God, and receive most edification; and will not *sin* for communion with any: He will sufficiently difference between a holy orderly Assembly, and a corrupt disordered one; and between an able faithfull Pastor, and an ignorant or worldly hireling: And he desireth that the Pastors of the Church may make that due separation by the holy Discipline of Christ, which may prevent the peoples disorderly separation. But for all this, he will not deny his presence upon just occasion to any Christian Congregation that worshipeth God in truth, though with many modal imperfections, so be it they impose no *sin* upon him as necessary to his communion with them. Nor will he deny the *spiritual communion* of *faith* and *Love* to those that he holdeth not *local* communion with: He knoweth that all our worship of God is sinfully imper-

sect; and that it is a dividing principle to hold, that we may joyn with none that worship God in a faulty manner: for then we must joyn with none on earth: He knoweth that his presence in the worship of God, is no sign of his approbation of all the failings of Pastors or people in their personal or modal imperfections; as long as he joyneth not in a worship so corrupt as to be it self unacceptable to God. While men who are all imperfect and corrupt are the worshippers, the manner of their worship will be such as they, in some degree imperfect and corrupt. The solid Christian hath his eye upon all the Churches in the world, in the determining of such questions: He considereth what worship is offered to God in the Churches of the several parties of Christians, the Greeks, Armenians, Abassines, Lutherans, &c. as well as what is done in the Country where he liveth: and he considereth whether God *disown* and *reject* the worship of almost all the Churches in the world, or not: For he dare no further reject them than God rejecteth them: nor will he voluntarily separate from those Assemblies where the presence of Christ, in his Spirit and acceptance, yet remaineth. And his fuller acquaintance with the gracious nature, office and tenderness of Christ, together with greater Love to his Brethren, doth cause him in this to judge more gently than young censorious Christians do. And his humble acquaintance with his *own* infirmities, maketh him the more compassionate to others. If he should think that God would reject all that *order not*, and *mend not* their prayers aright, he would be afraid of being rejected himself, who is still conscious of greater faultiness in his own prayers, than a meer defect in *words* and *order*; even of a great defectiveness in that

that faith, and desire, and love, and zeal, and reverence which should be manifested in prayer. Though he be more apprehensive than others of the excellency and necessity of the holiness and spirituality of the soul in worship; yet withall he is more *judicious* and *charitable* than the peevish and passionate infant Christians, who think that God doth judge as they do, and seeth no grace where they see none; and taketh all to be superstitious or fanatical, that differ from their opinions or manner of worship; or that he is as ready to call every error in the *method* or the *words* of prayer, *Idolatry* or *Willworship*, as those are that speak not what they they know, but what they have heard some Teachers whom they reverence say before them. *He that dwelleth in Love, doth dwell in God, and God in him*, and he that dwelleth in God, is liker to be left acquainted with his mind concerning his children and his worship, than he that dwelleth in wrath, and pride, and partiality.

2. But the *weak Christian* (though so far as he hath grace, he is of the same mind, and abhorreth discord and division among the flock of Christ, yet) being more *dark*, and *selfish*, and *distempered*, he is much more prone to unwarrantable separations and divisions than the stronger Christian is. He is narrower sighted, and looketh little further than his own acquaintance, and the Country where he liveth; and mindeth not sufficiently the general state of the Churches through the world, nor understandeth well the interest of Christ and Christianity in the earth. His knowledge and experience being small, his charity also is but small; and a little thing tempteth him to condemn another, and aggravate his faults, and think him unworthy

of the communion of the Saints. He is much more ſenſible of the *judgement*, and *affections*, and *concernments* of thoſe few with whom he doth converſe, and that are of his opinion, than of the *judgement* and *practice*, and concernments of the univerſal Church. He knoweth not how to *prefer* the *judgements* and *holineſs* of *ſome* that he thinketh *more excellent* than the reſt, without much undervaluing and cenſuring of all others, that are not of their opinion: He cannot chuſe the actual local communion of the beſt ſociety, without ſome unjuſt contempt of others, or ſeparation from them. He hath not ſo much knowledge as may ſufficiently acquaint him with his ignorance; And therefore he is apt to be unreaſonably confident of his preſent apprehenſions, and to think verily that all his own conceptions are the certain truth; and to think them ignorant or ungodly, or very weak at leaſt that differ from him. For he hath not throughly and impartially ſtudied all that may be ſaid on the other ſide. The Authority of his choſen Teacher and ſect is greater with him (if he fall into that way) than the Authority of all the moſt wiſe and holy perſons in the world beſides. What the Scripture ſpeaketh of the unbelieving world, he is apt to apply to all thoſe of the Church of Chriſt, that *are* not of his mind and party; And when Chriſt commandeth us to come out of the *world*, he is prone to underſtand it of coming out *from the Church* into ſome ſtricter and narrower ſociety; and is apt with the Papiſts, to appropriate the name and priviledges of the Church, to his *party alone*, and to condemn all others. Eſpecially if the *Church-Governours* be carnal and ſelf-ſeeking, or otherwiſe very culpable, and

if Discipline be neglected, and if prophaneness be not sufficiently discountenanced, and godliness promoted; he thinketh that such a Church is no Church, but a prophane society: God hath taught him by repentance to see the mischief of ungodliness; but he yet wanteth that experience which is needfull to make him know the mischiefs of Church-divisions: He had too much experience himself of the evil of prophaneness before his conversion: but he hath not tryed the evil of Schism; and without some sad experience of its fruits, in himself or others, he will hardly know it as it should be known. Because it is the custome of *some* malignant enemies of godliness, to call the godly *Hereticks*, *Schismaticks*, *factious Sectaries*, *&c.* therefore the very names do come into credit with him; and he thinks there are no such persons in the world, or that there is no danger of any such crimes: Till he be taught by sad experience that the professors of sincerity are in as much danger on that side as on the other; and that the Church (as well as Christ) doth suffer between two thieves, the *Prophane* and the *Dividers*. *Paul* was unjustly called the ring-leader of a Sect, *Acts* 24. 5. and Christianity called a *Heresie* and a *Sect* every where spoken against, *Acts* 28. 22. & 24. 14. But for all that, *Heresie* is a fruit of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 20. and some of them called *damnable*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. and they are the tryal of the Church, to difference the *approved* members from the chaff, 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. And an obstinate Heretick is to be *avoided* by true Believers, *Titus* 3. 10. And the Pharisees and Sadducees are well reputed to be several *Sects*, *Acts* 5. 17. & 23. 7. & 26. 5. And *dividers* and *divisions* are justly branded in Scripture, as aforesaid: There

must be no *Schism* in the body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 25. The following of *falsified Teachers* in a way of *division from the rest*, or *opposition* to them, doth shew that men are *carnal* in too great a measure, though it be not in predominancy as in the prophane. 2 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3. *And I Brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ: I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollo, are ye not carnal?* How much more when he that is for *Paul* doth censure and rail at *Cephas* and *Apollo?* He that hath seen the course of men professing godliness in *England* in this age, may easily and sadly know how prone weak Christians are to unjust separations and divisions, and what are the effects: He that had heard many zealous in prayer, and other duties, and the next year see them turning *Quakers*, and railing in the open Congregations at the ablest, holiest, self-denying Ministers of Christ, and at their flocks, with a [*Come down thou deceiver, thou hireling, thou wolf; ye are all greedy dogs, &c.*] and shall see how yet poor souls run into that reviling and irrational Sect, (to say nothing of all other *Sects* among us) will no longer doubt whether the *weak* be inclinable to Schism, but will rather lament the dangerousness of their station; and know that all is not done when a sinner is converted from an ungodly state. Study the reason of those three texts, *Ephes.* 4. 13, 14, 15, 16. *For the edifying the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and*

of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in Love may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joyned together and *compacted, by that which every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body,* to the *Edifying of it self in love.* Here you see the *children* are apt to be carryed into dividing parties. And that they are apteſt to be *Proud*, and that way to miscarry, see 1 Tim. 3. 6. *Not a novice (or raw young Christian) lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*; And then followeth the effect, Act. 20. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them.* I would not have you groundlesly accuse any Christian with a charge of *Pride*; But I must tell you, that the childish *Pride* of apparel, is a petty business, in comparison of that *Pride* which many in sordid attire have manifested, who in their ignorance do rage and foam out words of falshood and reproach against Christs Ministers and Servants, as if they were all *fools* or *impious* in comparison of them; speaking evil of that which they never understood: The lifting up the Heart above the people of the Lord, in the *Pride* of supposed *Holiness*, is incomparably worse, than *Pride* of *Learning*, *honour*, *greatness*, *wit* or *wealth*. Nay it hath oft been to me a matter of wonder to observe how little all those *plain* and

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urgent Texts of *Scripture*, which cry down *Division*, do work upon many of the younger Christians, who yet are as quickly toucht as any, with a Text that speaketh against prophaneness and lukewarmness. In a word, they are often of the temper of *James* and *John*, when they would fain have had Christ have revenged himself on his opposers by fire from Heaven: *They know not what manner of Spirit they are of*, Luk. 9. 55. They think verily that it is a holy zeal for God, when it is the boiling of passion, pride and selfishness. They *feel* not the sense of such words as Christs, Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *I pray also for them who shall believe on me, through their word; that they All may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me*, &c.

3. And as for the *seeming Christians*, in this they are of several sorts. When their *carnal interest* lyeth in complyance with the Major part and stronger side, then no men do more cry up *Unity* and *Obedience*: what a noise do many thousand Papist-Prelates, Jesuites and Fryers, make with these two words throughout the world. *Unity* and *Obedience* (unto them upon their terms) do signifie Principally *their worldly greatness*, *wealth* and *power*. But if the Hypocrite be engaged in point of honour or other carnal interest on the *suffering side*, or be out of hope of any advantage, in the common rode; then no man is so much for separation and singularity as he. For he must needs be noted for some body in the world, and this is the chief way that he findeth to accomplish it. And so being *lifted up with pride*, *he falleth into*

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the Condemnation of the Devil, and becomes a firebrand in the Church.

LIII. 1. *A Christian indeed* is not only *zealous* for the Unity and *Concord* of Believers, but he *seeketh it on the right terms*, and in *the way*, that is fittest to attain it. *Unity*, *Peace* and *Concord* are like *Piety* and *Honesty*, things so unquestionably *good*, that there are scarce any men of reason and common sobriety, that ever were heard to oppose them *Directly* and *for themselves*: And therefore all that are *enemies* to them are yet *pretenders* to them; and oppose them 1. In *their causes* only, 2. Or *covertly* and under some *other name*. Every man would have *Unity*, *Concord* and *Peace* in his *own way* and upon *his own terms*: But if the *right terms* had been *understood* and *consented* to as sufficient, the Christian world had not lain so many hundred years in the *sin* and *shame* and *ruines* as it hath done. And the cause of all is, that *Christians indeed*, that have *clear confirmed judgements*, and *strength of grace*, are very few; and for number and strength unable to perswade or overrule the *weak*, the *passionate* and the falsehearted worldly hypocritical multitude; who bear down all the counsels and endeavours of the wise.

The *judicious faithful Christian* knoweth, that there are *three degrees* or sorts of *Christian Communion*, which have their *several terms*: 1. The *universal-church Communion*, which *all Christians* as such must hold among themselves. 2. *Particular Church-communion*, which those that are conjoyned for *personal Communion* in Worship do hold under the same Pastors and among themselves. 3. The extraordinary intimate communion that some Christians hold together, who are *bosome friends*,

friends, or are ſpecially able and fit to be helpful and comfortable to each other.

The laſt concerneth not our preſent buſineſs: we muſt hold Church-communion with many that are unfit to be *our boſome friends*, and that have no eminency of parts or piety, or any ſtrong-perſwading evidence of ſincerity. But the terms of *Catholick Communion*, he knoweth, are ſuch as theſe. 1. They muſt be ſuch as were the terms of Church-Communion in the dayes of the Apoſtles. 2. They muſt be ſuch as are plainly and *certainly* expreſſed in the holy Scriptures. 3. And ſuch as the *Univerſal Church* hath in ſome ages ſince been actually agreed in. 4. And thoſe points are likeſt to be ſuch, which all the differing parties of Chriſtians are agreed in as *Neceſſary* to Communion to this day (ſo we call not thoſe Chriſtians that deny the eſſentials of Chriſtianity) 5. Every man in the former ages of the Church was admitted to this *Catholick Church-communion*, who in the *Baptiſmal Vow or Covenant, gave up himſelf to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt*; as his Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, his *Owner*, *Governour* and *Father*, *renouncing the fleſh, the world and the Devil*. And *more particularly*, as man hath an *Underſtanding*, a *Will* and an *executive power*, which muſt all be ſanctified to God, ſo *the Creed* was the *particular Rule* for the *Credenda* or things to be *Believed*, and the *Lords Prayer* for the *Petenda* or things to be *Willed*, *Loved* and *Deſired*, and the Ten Commandments for the *agenda* or things to be *done*: ſo that to *Conſent* to theſe *Rules particularly*, and to all the Holy Scriptures implicitly and generally, was the thing *then* required to Catholick Communion. The *belief* of the *doctrine* being neceſſary

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for the *ſanctifying* of the *heart* and *life*, the Belief of ſo much is of Neceſſity, without which the *Heart* cannot be *ſanctified*, or devoted in Covenant to God our Creator, Redeemer and Regenerater; and without which we cannot *Love God* (as reconciled to us in Chriſt) *above* all, and our neighbours as our ſelves. So that, *in a word*, he that can tell what the Baptiſmal Vow or Covenant is, can tell what is neceſſary to that *Catholick Church-communion*, which belongeth to *Chriſtians as Chriſtians*, at how great a diſtance ſoever they dwell from one another.

And then for *Particular Church-communion*, which is *local* and *perſonal*, it is moreover neceſſary, 1. That each member acknowledge and ſubmit to the ſame Paſtors. 2. That they be guided by them in the convenient circumſtances and adjuncts of Worſhip: For if ſome perſons will not conſent or ſubmit to the *ſame Paſtors* that the body of the Church conſenteth and ſubmiteth to, they cannot have communion particularly and locally with that Church, nor are they members of it; no more than they can be members of the ſame Kingdom that have not the ſame King: And there being no ſolemn worſhip performed but by the Miniſtry of thoſe Paſtors, they cannot joyn in the *worſhip* that joyn not with the *Miniſter*. And if ſome members will not *conſent* and *ſubmit* to the neceſſary determination of the adjuncts or external modes of worſhip, they cannot joyn in local, particular Church-communion where that Worſhip is performed: As if the Paſtor and the body of the Church will meet in ſuch a *place*, at ſuch a *day* and *hour*, and ſome members will not meet with them *at* that *place* and *day* and *hour*, they cannot

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possibly then have their local personal communion. Or if the Pastor will use such a *Translation* of the Scriptures, or such a *Version* of the Psalms, or such a *Method* in *Preaching* and *Prayer*, or such *Notes* or *books* and other like helps; if any members will not submit, nor hold Communion with the rest, unless that Translation, or *Version*, or *Method* of Preaching, or Praying, or *Notes* or *Books* be laid aside, he cannot *have Communion* while he *refuseth it*. If the Pastor and all the rest will not yield to him, he must joyn with some other Church that he can agree with. And as long as the *Catholick Church communion* is maintained (which consisteth in *Unity* of the Christian-covenant, or of *Christianity*, or of *Faith*, *Love* and *Obedience*) the difference of modes and circumstances between *particular Churches* must be allowed without any breach of *Charity* or without disowning one another: And he that cannot be a member of *one particular Church*, may quietly joyn himself to another without condemning that which he dissenteth from, so far as to hinder his *Catholick* Communion with it; (even as among the Papists, men may be of which *Order* of Religious persons they best like, as long as they submit to their *General* Government.) And here the *strong judicious Christian* for his part will never be guilty of Church-divisions: For, 1. He will make nothing necessary to Church-communion, which any *sober*, *pious*, *peaceable* minds shall have *any just reason* to except against, or which may not well be manifested to be for the *Edification* of the *Church*: 2. And he will *bear* with the *weak* dissenters so far as will stand with the *peace* and welfare of the Church. 3. And

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he will particularly give leave to ſuch weak ones as cannot yet hold communion with him, being peaceable, and not promoting hereſie, ungodlineſs or ſedition to joyn to another Church where they *can* hold communion, with peace to their own Conſciences: as long as they continue their foreſaid *Catholick-communion*. For the *ſtrong* know that they muſt not only [*bear with*] but [*bear*] the *infirmities of the weak*, *and not to pleaſe themſelves, but every one of them to pleaſe his neighbour for good to edification, For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf.* —— And ſo they will *receive one another, as Chriſt alſo received us to the glory* of God, not *deſpiſing* the *weak*, nor *rejecting* them that *God receiveth*, Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 7. & 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 17, 18. And thus you may ſee how eaſie a matter it were to unite and reconcile all the Chriſtian World, if the principles of the *judicious confirmed Chriſtian* might be received and prevail; and that it is not he that is the cauſe of the abundance of *ſin* and calamity which diviſions have cauſed, and continued in the Church. But that which now ſeemeth an impoſſible thing may quickly and eaſily be accompliſhed if all were ſuch as he: And that the *difficulty* of reconciling and uniting Chriſtians, lyeth not firſt in *finding out the terms*, but in making *men* fit to receive and practice the terms from the beginning received by the Churches: This is *Lirinenſis* his *Quod ſemper, ubiq; & ab omnibus receptum eſt.* (ſuppoſing ſtill that the *Magiſtrate be ſubmitted to by every ſoul*, even as he is the *keeper* of *both tables*, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3.)

2. But the *weak Chriſtian* is too eaſily tempted to be the divider of the Church, by expecting that it be *united* upon his *impoſſible* or *unrighteous terms*.

Sometime

Sometime he will be *Orthodox overmuch*, or rather *wise in his own conceit*, Rom. 12. 16. and then none are *judged* fit for his communion that be not of his opinion, in controverted Doctrinals (e. g. predestination, the manner of the work of grace, freewill, perseverance, and abundance such:) sometime he will be *righteous overmuch*, or (to speak more properly) *superstitious*: And then none are fit for his communion, that Worship not God in that method and manner for circumstantials, which he esteemeth best: And his *charity* is so *weak* that it feeth him not from *thinking evil*, 1 Cor. 13. and so *narrow* that it covereth not either many or great infirmities. The more need he hath of the forbearance and charity of others, the less can he bear or forbear others himself. The *strong Christian* must bear the infirmities of the *weak*; but the *weak Christian* can scarce bear with the *weak* or *strong*: Nay he is oft too impatient with some of their *virtues* and *duties*, as well as with their *infirmities*. He is of too *private* a spirit, and too insensible of the publick interest of the Church of Christ. And therefore he must have all the World come over to him, and be conformed to his opinion and party, and unite upon his mistaken narrow terms if they will have Communion with him: I mean, it is thus with him when the temptation on that side prevaileth. And sometime he is overcome with the temptation of *Domination*, to make his judgement the Rule to others: and then he quite overvalueth his own understanding, and will needs be judge of all the controversies in the Church; and taketh it as unsufferable, if wiser and better men do not take him as infallible and in every thing observe his will.

will. And when his brethren give him the reason of their dissent, as his *judgement* is not clear enough to understand them, so his *passion* and *partiality* are too strong to suffer his judgement to do its part. And thus oft-times he is a greater hinderance to the Churches *Unity*, than the enemies of the Church themselves: For he hath not *judgement* enough to guide him the right way, and yet he hath so much *zeal* as will not suffer him to keep his errours to himself.

3. And all these distempers that are but in a lower degree in the *weak Christian*, are *predominant* in the *Hypocrite*. The Church shall have no concord or peace if he can hinder it, but what is consistent with his carnal interest, his *honour*, or *wealth*, or *dignity* in the world. The pride and covetousness which rule himself, he would have to make the terms of concord, and to rule all others. It is *Hypocrites* in the Church that are the greatest cause of *discord* and *divisions*; having *selfish spirits*, *principles* and *ends*, and having always a *work* of their own to do, which suits not well with the work of Christ; and yet Christs work *must* be subjected to it, and ordered and overruled by it. And while they pretend to go to the Scriptures, or to Councils or Fathers for their *reasons*, indeed they go first for them to their *worldly interest*; and then would fain hire or press the *Scripture*, *Church* or *Fathers* to serve *their turn*, and come in as witnesses on *their side*. And thus the *Church*, as well as *Christ*, is betrayed by the covetous *Judas*'s of his own family: And the servants of the world, the flesh and Devil, that take up the livery of Christ, and usurp the name and honour of Christians, do more effectually hinder the

concord and prosperity of the Church, than any open enemies do. And those that are indeed no *Christians*, do cause Christianity to be reproached: Even as Spies and Traitors that are hired by the enemy to take up arms in the Army which they fight against, that they may betray it by their fraud, and do more harm to it, by raising mutinies, and by false conduct, than a multitude of professed enemies could have done. It is *proud*, and *worldly* carnal Hypocrites, that hinder most the concord of Believers.

LIV. 1. *A confirmed Christian* is of a *peaceable spirit*. He is not mutterly, domineering, turbulent, hurtfull, cruell, seditious, factious, or contentious. He is like ripened fruits, that are *mellow* and *sweet*, when the younger, greener fruits are *sowre* and *harsh*. He is not *wise in his own conceit*, Rom. 12. 16. and therefore not over urgent in obtruding his conceits on others, not quarrelsome with all that cannot entertain them; nor will he easily lay mens salvation or damnation, no nor the *Churches peace*, upon them. He is *kindly affectioned to others with brotherly love, yea, loveth his neighbour as himself*, Rom. 12. 10. & 13. 9, 10. And therefore he *doth to others as he would they should do to him*; and useth them as he would be used by them: And then how far they are like to suffer by him, you may easily judge. For *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour*, Rom. 13. 10. He is above the portion of the worldling, and a contemner of that vanity which carnal men account their felicity; and therefore he preferreth *love* and *quietness* before it, and can *lose his right* when the interest of *Love and Peace* requireth it. He is become as a *little child* in his conversion, *Matth.* 18. 3. and is low and little in

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his own eyes, and therefore contendeth not for *priority* or preheminence, either in place or power, or reputation of his learning, wisdom or piety; but *in honour preferreth others* before himself, *Rom.* 12. 10. *He mindeth not high things, but condescendeth to men of low estate*, Rom. 12. 16. and therefore will not contend for estimation or precedency, nor scramble to be highest, though he rise by the ruines of mens bodies and souls. *If it be possible, as much as lyeth in him, he will live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12. 18. For he is not one that by *word* or *deed will avenge himself*; *but* when the *wrath* of others is up like a blustring storm, *he giveth place to it*, he boweth before it, or goeth out of the way, *Rom.* 12. 19. *If his enemy hunger, he feedeth him*; *if he thirst, he giveth him drink*; which oppressors would *deprive* not only an *enemy*, but the *righteous* of their meat and drink: and thus he melteth his hardened enemies, by heaping kindnesses upon them when they are wrathfull, and proud, and contentious, and do him wrong, or use provoking words against him, he is *not overcome* of *their* evil to imitate them, but he *overcometh their evil* with his good, *Rom.* 12. 20, 21. If God have given him more knowledge and abilities than others, he doth not presently set up himself to be admired for it, nor speak disdainfully and contemptuously of those that are not of his mind: But he sheweth the eminency of his wisdom, *with meekness by the works of a good conversation*, and by *doing better* than the unwiser do, *James* 3. from verse 1. to 13. He is endued with the *wisdom from above*, *which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruit, without partiality* (or wavering in persecution, as

Dr. *Hammond* renders it) *and without hypocrisie.* And thus the *fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace*, Jam. 3. 17, 18. As he is *taught of God to love his brother*, 1 Thes. 4. 9. So that same teaching with experience of the effects assureth him, that they that pretend to be *wiser* and *better than others, when they have bitter, envious zeal and strife in their hearts, they vainly glory and lie against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work*, James 3. 14, 15, 16. (Read but the story of the Jewish Zealots in *Josephus*, and the heretical Zealots in all ages of the Church, and you will perceive the truth of this) when such quarrelsome spirits are filling the Church with *contentions* or vexations about their *meats*, and *drinks*, and *daies*, &c. the *Christian indeed* understandeth that the *Kingdom of God* consisteth not of such things as these, but in *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*; *and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of* (wise and sober) *men. Therefore he followeth after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another; and will not for meats, &c. destroy the work of God*, Rom. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. He stayeth not till peace be offered him, or brought home to him, but *he followeth peace with all men*, as well as *holiness*, Heb. 12. 14. If it fly from him, he *pursueth* it: if it be denied him, he *seeketh* it, and will not refuse to stoop to the poorest for it, and to beg it of his inferiours, if it were upon his knees, rather than be denied it, and live an unpeaceable disquiet life, *Psal.* 34. 14. For he believeth, that *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they*

shall

shall be called the children of God, Matth. 5. 9.

2. And the *weak Christian* hath the same spirit, and therefore the love of *peace* is most predominant in him: But alas he is too easily tempted into Religious passions, discontents, contentious disputations, quarrelsome and opprobrious words; and his judgement lamentably darkened and perverted whenever contentious zeal prevaileth, and passions do perturb the quiet and orderly operations of his soul. He wanteth both the knowledge and the experience and the mellowness of spirit, which riper Christians have attained: He hath a less degree of Charity, and is less acquainted with the mischiefs of unpeaceableness: And therefore it is the common course of young professors, to be easily tempted into unpeaceable waies: and when they have long tryed them (if they prove not Hypocrites) to come off at last upon experience of the evils of them, and so the *young Christians* conjunct with *some hypocrites* make up the rigorous, fierce, contentious and vexatious party, and the aged riper Christians make up the holy, moderate, healing party, that groan and pray for the Churches peace, and mourn in secret both for the *ungodliness* and *violence* which they cannot heal. Yea the difference is much apparent in the *Books* and *Sermons* which each of them is best pleased with. The *ripe experienced* Christian loveth those Sermons that kindle Love, and tend to *Peace*; and love such healing Books as do narrow differences, and tend to reconcile and heal (such as Bishop *Halls* Peace-maker, and *Pax terris*, and all his writings; and Bishop *Davenants*, Bishop *Mortons*, and Bishop *Hall's* Pacificatory Epistles to *Dureus*, and Mr. *Burroughs's Irenicon*, *Ludov. Grocius*, *Amyraldus*, *Junius*, *Pareus's*, and many

other *Intricate* written by forein Divines, to say nothing of those that are upon single controversies. But the younger sowre uncharitable Christians are better pleased with such Books and Sermons as call them aloud to be very zealous for this or that controverted point of Doctrine, or for or against some circumstance of worship or Church discipline, or about some fashions, or customs, or indifferent things, as if the Kingdom of God were in them. *Rom.* 14. 1, 2, 15, 16.

But the *seeming Christian* is either a meer temporizer, that will be of that Religion whatever it be which is most in fashion, or which the higher powers are of, or which will cost him least: Or else he will run into the other extream, and lift up himself by *affected singularities*, and by making a bustle and stir in the world about some small and controverted point, and careth not to sacrifice the peace and safety of the Church, to the honour of his own opinions. And as *small* as the Christian Church is, he must be of a *smaller society* than it, that he may be sure to be amongst the best; while indeed he hath no sincerity at all, but placeth his hopes in being of the *right Church* or *Party*, or *Opinion*: And for *his Party* or *Church*, he burneth with a feverish kind of zeal, and is ready to call for fire from Heaven; and to deceive him, the Devil sendeth him some from Hell, to consume those that are not of his mind: Yet doth he bring it as an Angel of light to defend the *Truth* and *Church* of *Christ*: And indeed when the Devil will be the *Defender* of *Truth*, or of the *Church*, or of *Peace*, or *Order*, or *Piety*, he doth it with the *most burning* zeal. You may know him by the *means* he useth. *He defendeth the Church* by forbidding the people to

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read the Scriptures in a known tongue, and by imprisoning and burning the soundest and holiest members of it, and abusing the most learned faithfull Pastors, and defendeth the flock by casting out the Shepherds, and such like means, as the murders of the *Waldenses*, and the Massacres of *France* and *Ireland*, and the *Spanish* Inquisition, and Queen *Maries* Bonefires, and the Powder plot; yea and the *Munster*, and the *English* rage and phrensies, may give you fuller notice of: He that hath no *Holiness*, nor *Charity* to be zealous for, will be zealous for his *Church*, or *Sect*, or *Customs*, or *Opinions*. And then this zeal must be the evidence of his piety: and so the Inquisitors have thought they have religiously served God, by murdering his servants; and it is the badge of their honour to be the Devils hang men, to execute his malice on the members of Christ; and all this is done in zeal for Religion by irreligious Hypocrites. There is no standing before the malicious zeal of a graceless Pharisee, when it riseth up for his *carnal interest*, or the *honour*, and *traditions*, and *customs* of his Sect, *Luk.* 6. 7. *And they were filled with madness, and communed with one another what they might do to Jesus*, *Luke* 4. 28. *Acts* 5. 17. & 13. 45. *John* 16. 2. *Rom.* 10 2. *Phil.* 3. 6. *Acts* 26. 10, 11. The zeal of a true Christian *consumeth himself* with grief to see the madness of the wicked; But the zeal of the Hypocrite *consumeth others*, that by the light of the fire his Religiousness may be seen: You may see the Christians fervent Love to God, by the fervent flames which he can suffer for his sake: And you may see the *fervent Love* of the *Hypocrite*, by the flames which he kindleth for others: By these he cryeth with *Jehu*, *Come and see my zeal for the Lord*. 2 *King.* 10. 16. 2 *Sam.* 21. 2.

LV. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that most *highly esteemeth* and regardeth the *interest of God and mens salvation in the world*; and taketh all things else to be inconsiderable in comparison of these. The interest of Great men, and Nobles, and Commanders; yea and *his own* in corporal respects, as riches, honour, health and life, he taketh to be things unworthy to be named in competition with the interest of *Christ* and *Souls*. The thing that his heart is most set upon in the world, is that God be glorified, and that the world acknowledge him their King, and that his Laws be obeyed, and that darkness, and infidelity, and ungodliness may be cast out; and that pride, and worldliness, and fleshly lusts may not hurry the miserable world unto perdition. It is one of the saddest and most amazing thoughts that ever entreth into his heart, to consider how much of the world is overwhelmed in *ignorance* and *wickedness*, and how great the Kingdom of the Devil is in comparison of the Kingdom of Christ: that God should forsake so much of his Creation: that Christianity should not be owned in above the sixth part of the world; and Popish pride and ignorance, with the corruptions of many other Sects, and the worldly carnal minds of Hypocrites, should rob Christ of so much of this little part, and leave him so small a flock of holy ones, that must possess the Kingdom. His soul consenteth to the *Method* of the Lords Prayer, as prescribing us the order of our *Desires*: And in his prayers he seeketh first (in order of estimation and intention) the *Hallowing of Gods name*, and the *coming of his Kingdom*, and *the doing of his Will on Earth as it is done in Heaven*, before his *daily bread*, or the *pardon of his sins*, or the *deliverance* of his

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own soul from *temptations* and the *evil* one. Mark him in his prayers, and you shall find that he is above other men taken up in earnest petitions for the *Conversion* of the *Heathen* and *Infidel world*, and the undeceiving of Mahometans, Jews and Hereticks, and the clearing of the Church from those Papal tyrannies, and fopperies and corruptions, which make Christianity hateful or contemptible in the eyes of the Heathen and Mahometan world, and hinder their Conversion. No man so much lamenteth the Pride, and Covetousness, and Laziness, and Unfaithfulness of the Pastors of the Church, because of the doleful consequents to the Gospel, and the souls of men; and yet with all possible honor to the sacred office which they thus prophane. No man so heartily lamenteth the contentions and divisions among Christians, and the doleful destruction of charity thereby: It grieveth him to see how much selfishness, pride and malice prevaileth with them that should shine as lights in a benighted world, and how obstinate and uncurable they seem to be, against the plainest means, and humblest motions, for the Churches edification and peace, *Psal.* 120. 6, 7. & 122. 6. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Psal.* 119. 136. *Zeph.* 3. 18. *Ezek.* 9. 4. *Psal.* 69. 9. *Joh.* 2. 17. He envieth not Kings and Great men their dominions wealth or pleasure; nor is he at all ambitious to participate in their tremendous exaltation: But the thing that his heart is set upon is, that the *Kingdoms of the World may all become the Kingdoms of the Lord*, Rev. 11. 15. and that the *Gospel may* every where have *free course and be glorified*, and the Preachers of it be encouraged, or at least *delivered from unreasonable wicked men*, 2 Thes. 3. 1, 2. Little careth he who is uppermost

permoſt or conquereth in the world, or who goeth away with the preferments or riches of the earth (ſuppoſing that he fail not of *his duty to his Rulers*) ſo that it may go well with the affairs of the Goſpel, and ſouls be but helped in the way to Heaven. Let God be honoured, and ſouls converted and edified, and he is ſatisfied. This is it that maketh the Times good in his account: He thinketh not as the proud and carnal Church of *Rome*, that the Times are beſt when the Clergy is richeſt and greateſt in the world, and overtop Princes, and claim the ſecular power, and live in worldly pomp and pleaſures; But when holineſs moſt aboundeth, and the members of Chriſt are likeſt to their Head, and when multitudes of ſincere believers are daily added to the Church; and when the *Mercy* and *Holineſs* of God ſhine forth, in the *Numbers* and *Purity* of his Saints. It is no *Riches* or *Honour* that can be heaped upon *himſelf* or any others, that make the Times ſeem good to him, if *Knowledge* and *Godlineſs* are diſcountenanced and hindered, and the way to Heaven is made more difficult; if Atheiſm, infidelity, ungodlineſs, pride and malignity do prevail; and truth and ſincerity are driven into the dark, and when *he that departeth from evil maketh himſelf a prey*, Iſa. 59. 15. When *the godly man ceaſeth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men, when every man ſpeaketh vanity to his neighbour, and the poor are oppreſſed, and the needy ſigh, and the wicked walk on every ſide, when the vileſt men are exalted*, Pſal. 12. 1, 2, 5, 8. The Times are Good, when the Men are good; and *Evil* when the *Men* are evil, be they never ſo great or proſperous. As *Nehemiah* when he was Cup bearer to the King himſelf,

himself, yet wept and mourned for the desolations of *Jerusalem*, *Neh.* 1. 3, 4. & 2. 2, 3. Whoever prospereth, the Times are ill when there is a *famine of the Word of the Lord*, and when *the chief of the Priests and people do transgress, and mock Gods messengers, and despise his words, and misuse his Prophets*, 2 Chron. 36. 14, 16. Amos 8. 11, 12. When the Apostles are *charged to speak no more in the name of Christ*, Act. 4. 18. & 5. 40. It is a text enough to make one tremble, to think into what a desperate condition the Jews were carryed by a partial selfish zeal, 1 *Thes.* 2. 15, 16. who both *killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved; to fill up their sin alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* When the interest of themselves and their own Nation and Priesthood did so far blind and pervert them, that they durst *persecute* the Preachers of the Gospel, and *forbid them to speak to the people that they may be saved*, it was a sign that *wrath was come upon them to the uttermost: A Christian indeed* had rather be without *Jereboams* Kingdom, than *make Israel to sin*, & make the *basest of the people Priests*, and *stretch out his hand against the Prophet of the Lord*, 1 King. 12. 30, 31. & 13. 4. He had rather labour with his hands; as *Paul*, and live in poverty and rags, so that the Gospel may be powerfully and plentifully preached, and holiness abound, than to live in all the prosperity of the world, with the hinderance of mens salvation. He had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than be a Lord in the Kingdom of Satan: He cannot rise by the ruines of the Church, nor feed upon

those

those morsels that are the price of the blood of souls.

2. And the *weakest Christian* is in all this of the same mind; saving that *private* and *selfish* interest is not so *fully* overcome, nor so *easily* and *resolutely* denyed, *Luk.* 14. 26, 33.

3. But here the *Hypocrite* sheweth the falseness of his heart: His own interest is it that chooseth his Religion; and, that he may not torment himself by being wicked in the open light, he maketh himself believe that whatsoever is most for his own interest, is most pleasing unto God, and most for the good of souls, and the interest of the Gospel; so that the carnal Romish Clergie can perswade their Consciences, that all the darkness and superstitions of their Kingdom, and all their Opposition of the light of the Gospel of Christ, do make for the honour of God and the good of souls, because they uphold their tyrannie, wealth and pomp and pleasure. Or if they cannot perswade their Consciences to believe so gross a lye, let *Church* and *Souls* speed how they will, they will favour nothing that favoureth not their interest and ends: And the *interest* of the *flesh* and *spirit*, of the *world* and *Christ*, are so repugnant, that commonly such worldlings take the serious practice of Godliness, for the most hateful thing, and the serious practisers of it, for the most unsufferable persons, *Act.* 7. 57. & 21. 36. & 22. 22. & 24. 5, 6. *Job.* 19. 15. The *enmity of interests*, with the *enmity of nature*, between the *Womans* and the *Serpents* seed, will maintain that warfare to the end of the world, in which the Prince of the powers of darkness, shall seem to prevail, (as he did against our Crucified Lord:) but he shall be overcome by his *own successes*, and the just shall conquer by *patience* when they seem most

most conquered. The *name* and *form*, and *image* of Religion, the carnal hypocrite doth not only *bear*, but *favour*, and himself accept: But the *Life* and *serious practice* he abhorreth, as inconsistent with his worldly interest and ends. For *these* he can find in his heart, with *Ahab* to hate and imprison *Micaiah*, and prefer his four hundred flattering Prophets, 1 *King.* 22. 6, 8, 24, 27. If *Luther* will touch the Popes Crown and the Fryers Bellies, they will not scruple to Oppose and ruine, both him and all such Preachers in the World, if they were able, *John* 11. 48. 50. *Acts* 5. 28.

LVI. 2. *A Christian indeed* is one whose *Holiness* usually maketh him an eyesore to the *ungodly world*, and his *charity*, and *peaceableness*, and *moderation* maketh him to be censured as not *strict enough*, by the superstitious and dividing sects of Christians. For seeing the Church hath suffered between these two sorts of opposers, ever since the suffering of Christ himself, it cannot be but the *solid Christian* offend them *both*, because he hath that which *both* dislike. All the ungodly hate him for his *holiness*, which is cross to their interest and way; and all the *Dividers* will censure him for that *universal charity*, and *moderation* which is against their factious and destroying zeal (described, *Jam.* 3.) Even Christ himself was not strict enough, (in superstitious observances) for the ceremonious, zealous Pharisees: He *transgressed* (with his *Disciples*) the *tradition of the Elders*, in neglecting their observances, who transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition, *Matth.* 15. 2, 3. He was not strict enough in their uncharitable observation of the Sabbath day, *Matth.* 12. 2. *John* that was eminent for fasting, they said,

said, *had a Devil*: The *Son of man came eating* and *drinking*, and *they say*, *Behold a man gluttonous and a wine bibber, a friend of Publicans and sinners*: *But wisdom is justified of her Children*, Mat. 11. 18, 19. And the *weak* Christians, *Rom.* 14. 1, 2, 3. did censure those that durst eat those meats and do those things, which *they* conceived to be unlawful: They that erre themselves, and make God a Service which he never appointed, will censure all as lukewarm, or temporizers, or wide consciensced men, that erre not with them, and place not their Religion in such superstitious observances, as *Touch not, taste not, handle not, &c.* Col. 2. 18, 21, 22, 23. And the raw censorious Christians are offended with the *Charitable Christian*, because he damneth not as many and as readily as they, and shutteth not enow out of the number of believers, and judgeth not rigorously enough of their wayes. In a word, he is taken by one sort to be too strict, and by the other to be too complyant or indifferent in Religion, because he placeth not the Kingdom of God in meats and dayes, and such like circumstances, but in *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 15, 16, 17. And as *Paul withstood Peter to his face*, for drawing men to *make scruple* or conscience of things *lawful*, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13. So is the sound Christian *withstood* by the superstitious, for *not making scruple* of lawful things.

3. And the *weak Christian* is in the same case, so long as he followeth prudent, pious, charitable guides: But if he be taken in the snares of superstition, he pleaseth the superstitious party, though he displeaseth the World.

3. And whereas the solid Christian will not stir an inch from *truth* and *duty*, to escape either the

hatred

hatred of the *wicked*, or the bitterest censures of the Sectary or the weak; the *Hypocrite* must needs have *one party* on his side: For if both condemn him, and neither applaud him, he loseth his peculiar reward, *Matth.* 6. 2, 5. & 23. 5, 6, 7, 8.

LVII. 1. The *confirmed Christian* doth understand the *necessity* of a faithful Ministry, for the safety of the weak, (as well as the conversion of the wicked) and for the preservation of the interest of Religion upon earth! And therefore no personal unworthiness of Ministers, nor any calumnies of enemies, can make him think or speak dishonourably of that sacred office: But he reverenceth it as instituted by Christ; and though he loaths the *sottishness* and *wickedness* of those that run before they are sent, and are utterly insufficient or ungodly, and take it up for a Living or Trade only, as they would a common work, and are *Sons of Belial that know not the Lord*, and cause the *offering* of *the Lord to be abhorred*, 1 Sam. 2. 2, 17. Yet no such temptation shall overthrow his reverence to *the office*, which is the Ordinance of Christ: much less will he be unthankful to those that are able and faithful in *their* office, and labour instantly for the good of souls, as willing to spend and be spent for their Salvation. When the World abuseth and derideth and injureth them, he is one that honoureth them, both for their work and masters sake, and the experience which he hath had of the blessing of God on their labours to himself. For he knoweth that the smiting of the Shepheards is but the devils ancient way for the scattering of the flock. Though he knoweth that *if the salt have lost its savour, it is good for nothing, neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dung-hil,*

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but men cast it out, and it's trodden under foot: (*he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*) Luk. 14. 34, 35. Mat. 5. 13, 14. Yet he also knoweth, that *he that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet shall receive a Prophets reward*, Matth. 10. 41, 42. And that he that *receiveth them, receiveth Christ, and he that despiseth them*, that are sent by him, *despiseth him*, Luk. 10. 16. He therefore readily obeyeth those commands, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves; for they watch for your souls as those that must give account*: 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *We beseech you brethren to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you: and to esteem them very highly in Love for their work sake, and be at peace among your selves.* 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.*

2. But though the *weak Christian* be of the same mind so far as he is sanctified, yet is he much more easily tempted into a wrangling censoriousness against his Teachers, though they be never so able and holy men: and by seducers may be drawn to oppose them, or speak contemptuously of them, as the Galathians did of *Paul*, and some of the Corinthians, accounting him as their Enemy for telling them the truth, when lately they would have pluckt out their eyes to do him good, *Gal.* 4. 15, 16.

3. But the *Hypocrite* is most easily engaged against them; either when they grate upon the guilt of his bosome sin, or open his hypocrisie, or plainly cross him in his carnal interest, or else when his *Pride* hath conquered his Sobriety, and

engaged

engaged him in some Sect or erroneous way, which his Teachers are against, and would reduce him from, *Joh. 6. 66. Mark 5. 27. 2 Chron. 25. 16.*

LVIII. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that hath stored up such *manifold experience* of the *fulfilling of God's promises*, and the *hearing of prayers*, and of the *goodness of his holy waies*, as will greatly fortifie him against all temptations to *Infidelity*, *Apostasie* or *Distrust*. No one hath *stronger temptations* usually than he; and no one is so well furnished with weapons to resist them. The arguments of most others are fetcht out of their Books only; but *he* hath moreover a *life of experiences* to confirm his faith; and so hath the *witness in himself*. He hath tryed and found that in God, in holiness, in faith, in prayer, which will never suffer him to forsake them. Yea it is like that he hath upon record some such *wonders* in the answer of prayers, as might do much to silence an Infidel himself. I am sure many Christians have had such strange appearances of the extraordinary hand of God, that hath done much to destroy the remnants of their own unbelief, *Psal. 66. 16.*

2. But the *Experiences* of the *younger*, *weaker Christians*, are much shorter, and less serviceable to their faith: And they have not judgement enough to understand and make use of the dealings of God; but are ready to plead his providences unto evil ends and consequences; and to take their own passionate imaginations for the workings of the Spirit: It is ordinary with them to say, [This or that was set upon my heart, or spoken to me] as if it had been some divine inspiration, when it was nothing but the troubled workings of a weak distempered brain: and it is their own fantasie

and heart that saith that to them, which they think the Spirit of God within them said, *Heb.* 5. 11, 12, 13. 2 *Thes.* 2. 2. *John* 4. 1. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. 1 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Jer.* 23. 28. 27. 32. & 29. 8.

3. And the *Hypocrite* wanteth those *establishing Experiments*, of the power of the *Gospel*, and the *hearing of prayers*, and *fulfilling* of *promises*, and communion with Christ in the spirit: And therefore he is the more open to the power of temptations, and a subtil disputer will easilier corrupt him, and carry him away to flat Apostasie: For he wanteth the *Root* and *Witness* in himself, *Mat.* 13. 21, 22 1 *John* 5. 10. *Heb.* 6. 6, 7, 8. *Luk.* 8. 13.

LIX. 1. A *Christian indeed* is one that *highly valueth sanctified affections* and *passions*, that all he doth may be done as *lively* as possibly he can: And also holy *abilities* for *expression*. But he much *more valueth* the three great *essential constant parts* of the new creature within him; that is, 1. *A high estimation* of *God*, and *Christ*, and *Heaven*, and *Holiness* in his *understanding*, above all that can be set in any competition. 2. *A resolved choice and adhesion* of the *Will*, by which he preferreth *God*, and *Christ*, and *Heaven*, and *Holiness* above all that can be set against them, and is fixedly *resolved* here to place his happiness and his hopes. 3. The *main drift* and *endeavours* of his *Life*, in which he *seeketh first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, Mat. 6. 33. 9. 20. &c. In these three (his *Highest estimation*, his *Resolved choice* and *complacencies*, and his *Chief endeavours*) he taketh his standing constant evidences of his sincerity to consist: And by these he *tryeth himself* as to his state; and not by the *passionate* feelings or affections of his heart; nor by his memory or gifts or orderly thinking or expression.

And it is these Rational operations of his Soul in which he knoweth that Holiness doth principally consist; and therefore he most laboureth to be strong in these. 1. To ground his *Judgement* well; 2. And to resolve to fix his *Will*; 3. And to order his *Conversation* aright, *Psal.* 50. 23. Yet highly valuing sensible *Affections* and *gifts* of *utterance*, but in subserviency to *those* which are the vital acts, 1 *Cor.* 13. *Rom.* 7. 18, 19, *&c.* & 6. 16, 22. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Jam.* 2. *Col.* 1. 9. & 3. 16.

2. But the *weak Christian* usually placeth most of his religion in the more *affectionate* and *expressive* part. He striveth more with his heart for *passionate* apprehensions, than for *complacency* and *fixed resolution*: He is often in doubt of his sincerity, when he wanteth the *feeling affectionate* workings which he desireth, &c. thinketh he hath no more grace, than that he hath *sensibility* of *expressive* gifts. And so as he buildeth his comfort upon these *unconstant signs*, his comforts are accordingly *unconstant*: sometime he thinketh he hath grace, when his *body* or other advantages do help the excitation of his lively affections. And when the dulness of his *body* or other impediments hinder this, he questioneth his grace again, because he understandeth not aright the nature and chiefest acts of grace.

3. The *Hypocrite* hath neither the *Rational*, nor the *Passionate* part in *Sincerity*: But he may go much further in the *latter* than in the *former*: A quick and passionate nature, though unsanctified, may be brought to shed more tears, and express more fervour, than many a holy person can. Especially upon the excitation of some quickning Sermon, or some sharp affliction, or great conviction, or at the approach of death. Few of the most holy

persons can constantly retain so lively, fervent, passionate repentings, and desires and resolutions to amend, as some earnest persons have in sickness. The power of *fear alone* doth make them more *earnest*, that *Love* maketh many a gracious soul. But when the *fear* is over, they are the same again. How oft have I heard a sick man most vehemently profess his resolutions for a holy life, which all have come to nothing afterwards? How oft have I heard a common drunkard with tears cry out against himself for his sin, and yet go on in it? And how many gracious persons have I known, whose *judgements* and *wills* have been groundedly *resolved* for God and holiness, and their lives have been holy, fruitful and obedient, who yet could not shed a tear for sin, nor feel any very great sorrows or joys? If you judge of a man by his *earnestness* in some *good moods*, and not by the *constant tenor* of his life, you will think many an Hypocrite to be better than most Saints. Who would have thought that had seen him only in that fit, but that *Saul* had been a penitent man, when *he lift up his voice and wept, and said to David, Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil*, 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. A smaller matter will raise some *sudden passions*, than will *renew the soul*, and give the preheminence to God, and Holiness, and Heaven, in the *judgement*. *Will* and *Conversation*, *Hes.* 6. 4. & 13. 3. *Isa.* 58. 2. *Mat.* 13. 20.

LX. 1. A *Christian indeed confirmed in Grace*, is one that *maketh it the business of his life to prepare for death*; and delayeth not his *serious thoughts* of it, and preparations for it till it surprize him; and therefore when it cometh it findeth him *prepared*;

and

and he gladly entertaineth it as the messenger of his Father, to call him to his [illegible] home. It is not a strange unexpected thing to him, to hear he must die: He died daily in his daily sufferings, and mortified contempt of worldly things, and in his daily expectation of his change. He wondereth to see men at a dying time, surprised with astonishment and terrour, who jovially or carelessly neglected it before; as if they had never known till then that they must die? Or as if a few years time were reason enough for so great a difference: For that which he certainly knoweth will be, he looketh at as if it were even at hand; and his preparation for it is more serious in his health than other men is on their death-bed. He useth more carefully to bethink himself, what graces he shall need at a dying time, and in what case he shall then wish his soul to be; and accordingly he labourath in his provisions now; even as if it were to be to morrow. He verily believeth that it is incomparably *better for him to be with Christ*, than to abide on earth, and therefore (though *Death* of it self be an enemy, and terrible to nature) yet being the only passage into happiness, he gladly entertaineth it. Though he have not himself any clear and satisfactory apprehensions of the place and state of the happiness of departed souls, yet it quieteth him to know that they *shall be with Christ*, and that Christ *knoweth* all, and prepareth and secureth for him that promised Rest, *Joh.* 12. 26. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 7, 8. *Phil.* 1. 21, 23. *Luke* 23. 43. Though he is not free from all the natural fears of death, yet his belief and hope of endless happiness doth abate those fears by the joyfull expectation of the gain which followeth. (See my Book called *The last enemy*; *and*

the last work of a Believer, and that of *self-denial*, against the *fears* of *death*.)

But especially he *loveth* and *longeth* for the *coming* of *Christ to judgement*: as knowing that then the Marriage-day of the Lamb is come, and then the desires and hopes of all Believers shall be satisfied: *Then shall the Righteous shine as Stars in the Kingdom of their Father*; and the hand of violence shall not reach them. Every enemy then is overcome, and all the Redeemers work is consummated, and the Kingdom delivered up unto the Father. Then shall the ungodly and the unmercifull be confounded, and the righteous filled with everlasting joy, when their Lord shall throughly plead their cause, and justifie them against the accusations of Satan, and all the lies of his malicious instruments. O blessed, glorious, joyfull day, when Christ shall come with thousands of his Angels, to *execute vengeance* on the *ungodly world*, and to be *glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe*, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9, 10. When the patient followers of the Lamb shall behold him in glory whom they have believed in, and shall see that they did not pray, or hope, or wait in vain! When Christ himself and his sacred truth, shall be justified and glorified in the presence of the world, and his enemies mouths for ever stopped: *When he shall convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*, Jude 14, 15. Where then is the mouth that pleadeth the cause of infidelity and impiety? and reproached the serious holiness of Believers? and made a jest of the Judgements of the Lord? Then what terrours, and confusion,

and

and shame, what fruitless repentings will seize upon that man, that set himself against the holy ones of the Lord, and knew not the day of his visitation, and imbraced the image and form of godliness, while he abhorred the power. The joys which will then possess the hearts of the Justified, will be such as now no heart can comprehend. When Love shall come to be glorified in the highest expression, to those that lately were so low: when all their doubts, and fears, and sorrows, shall be turned into full contenting sight, and all tears shall be wiped away, and all reproaches turned into glory, and every enemy overcome, and sin destroyed, and holiness perfected, and our *vile bodies changed, and made like the glorious body* of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. *Col.* 3. 3, 4. Then will the *Love* and *work* of our *Redemption* be fully understood: And then a *Saint* will be a *Saint indeed*, when with Christ they shall *judge the Angels and the world*, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. and shall hear from Christ, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*, Mat. 25. 34. *Enter ye into the joy of your Lord*, Mat. 25. 21. Then *every knee shall bow* to Christ, and every tongue shall confess that *he is* Lord, *to the glory of God the Father*, Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11. Then *sin* will fully appear in its malignity, and holiness in its lustre unto all. The proud will then be abased, and the mouths of all the wicked stopped; when they shall see to their confusion the Glory of that Christ whom they despised, and of those holy ones whom they made their scorn: In vain will they then *knock when the door is shut, and cry, Lord, Lord, open unto us*, Mat. 25. 10, 11, 12. And in vain will they then wish, O that we had known the day of our visitation, that we might have *died the death of the righteous*,

and our latter end might have been in his, Numbers 23. 10. Rom. 3. 19. Job 5. 16. Psal. 107. 42. & 31. 13. & 19. 6, 8.

The day of Death is to true Believers a day of Happiness and Joy: But it is much easier for them to think with joy on the coming of Christ, and the day of Judgment, because it is a day of *fuller joy*, and soul and body soul be conjoyned in the blessedness; and there is nothing in it to be so great a stop to our desires, as *Death* is, which naturally is an *enemy*. God hath put a love of life, and fear of death into the nature of every sensible creature, as necessary for the preservation of themselves and others, and the orderly Government of the world: But what is there in the blessed day of Judgement, which a justified child of God should be averse to. O if he were but sure that this would be the day, or week, or year of the coming of his Lord, how glad would the *confirmed Christian* be? and with what longings would he be looking up, to see that most desired sight.

2. And the *weak Christian* is so far of the same mind, that he had rather come to God by *Death* and *Judgement*, than not at all: (except when temptations make him fear that he shall be condemned:) He hath fixedly made choice of that *Felicity*, which till then he cannot attain. He would not take all the pleasures of this world, for his hopes of the happiness of that day: But yet he thinketh not of it with so strong a faith, and great consolation, nor with such *boldness* and *desire*, as the *confirmed Christian* doth: but either with much more dull security, or more perplexity and fear. His thoughts of God and of the world to come, are much more dark and doubtfull; and his *fears*

of

of that day are usually so great as make his *desires* and *joys* scarce felt: Only he thinketh not of it with that contempt or stupidity as the [illegible] of hardened sinner; nor with the terrours of those that have no God, no Christ, no hope: (except when temptation bringeth him near to the borders of despair.) His *death* indeed is unspeakably *safer* than the death of the ungodly; and the joys which he is entring into will quickly end the terrour; but yet he hath no great comfort of the present; but only so much trust in Christ, as keepeth his heart from sinking into despair.

3. But to the *Hypocrite* or *seeming Christian*, *Death* and *Judgement* are the most unwelcome dates, and the *thoughts* of them the most unwelcome thoughts: He would take any tolerable life on earth, at any time, for all his hopes of Heaven; and that not only through the *doubts* of his own *sincerity* (which may sometime be the case of a tempted Christian) but through the unsoundness of his belief of the life to come, or the utter unsuitableness of his soul to such a blessedness; which maketh him look at it as less desirable to him, than a life of fleshly pleasures here. All that he doth for *Heaven* is upon meer necessity, because he knoweth that *Die he must*, and he had rather be in *Heaven* than in *Hell*, though he had rather be in prosperity on earth than either: And as he taketh Heaven but as a *reserve* or *second good*, so he seeketh it with *reserves*, and in the *second place*: And having no better preparations for *Death* and *Judgement*, no marvel if they be his greatest terrour. He may possibly by his self-deceit have some abatement of his fears, and he may by *Pride* and *Wit* seem very valiant and comfortable at his death, to hide his fear and pusillanimity from the world. But

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the care of all his misery is, that he sought not first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and laid not up a treasure in Heaven, but upon earth, and loved this world above God, & above the world to come, and so his heart is not set on Heaven, nor his affections on the things above, and therefore he hath not that *Love* to God, to Christ, to Saints, to perfect *Holiness*, which should make that world most delectable in his eyes, and make him think unfeignedly, that it is *best for him* to depart and live with Christ for ever. Having not the *Divine Nature*, nor having lived the *Divine Life* in walking with God, his *complacency* and *desires* are carnal, according to the nature which he hath. And this is the true cause (and not only his doubts of his own sincerity) of his unwillingness to die, or to see the day of Christs appearance. *Matth.* 6. 33. 19. 29, 21. 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. 1 *Cor.* 2. 13, 14. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4.

And thus I have shewed you from the *Word* of God, and the *Nature* of *Christianity*, the true Characters of the *confirmed Christian*, and of the *weak Christian*, and of the *seeming Christian*.

The *Uses* for which I have drawn up these Characters, and which the Reader is to make of them, are these.

I. Here the *weak Christian* and the *Hypocrite* may see what manner of persons they ought to be. Not only how *unsafe* it is to remain in a state of *Hypocrisie*, but also how *uncomfortable*, and *unserviceable*, and *troublesome* it is, to remain in a state of *weakness* and *diseasedness*; what a folly (and indeed a sign of *Hypocrisie*) is it to think, If I had but

grace

grace enough to save me, I would desire no more, or I would be well content. Are you content if you have but *Life* here, to difference you from the dead? If you were continually Infants, that must be fed, and carried, and made clean by others, or if you had a continual Gout, or Stone, or Leprosie, and lived in continual want and misery, you would think that *Life* alone is not enough; and that *non vivere tantum sed valere vita est*: that *Life* is uncomfortable, when we have nothing *but Life*, and all the delights of life are gone. He that lyeth in continual pain and want, is weary of his life, if he cannot separate it from those calamities. He that knoweth how necessary *strength* is, as well as *life*, to do any considerable service for God, and how many *pains* attend the diseases and infirmities of the weak, and what great dishonour cometh to Christ and Religion, by the faults and childishness of many that shall be pardoned and saved, would certainly bestir him with all possible care to get out of this *sick* or *infant* state.

II. By this you may see who are the *strong* Christians, and who are the *weak*: It is not always the man of *Learning* and *free expressions*, that can speak longest and wisest of holy things, that is the *strong confirmed* Christian: But he that most excelleth in the *Love* of God and man, and in a heavenly mind and holy life. Nor is it he that is unlearned, or of a weak memory, or slow expression, that is the weakest Christian: But he that hath least Love to God and man, and the most Love to his carnal self, and to the world, and the strongest corruptions, and the weakest grace. Many a poor day-labourer or woman, that can scarce speak sense, is a *stronger Christian* (as being stronger in *Faith*, and

and *Love*, and *Patience*, and *Humility*, and *Mortification*, and *Self-denial*) than many great Preachers and Doctors of the Church.

III. You see here what kind of men they be that we call the *Godly*; and what that *Godliness* is which we plead for, against the malicious serpent this Generation. The lyars would make men believe, that by *Godliness* we mean a few affected strains, or hypocritical shews, or fearful lip-service, or singular opinions, or needless scrupulosity, or ignorant zeal, yea *Schism*, or faction, or sedition, or rebellion, or what the Devil please to say. If these sixty Characters describe any such thing, then I will not deny, but in the way that such men call *Heresie*, faction, *Schism*, singularity, to worship we the God of our Fathers: But if not, the Lord rebuke thee Satan, and hasten the day when *lying lips shall be put to silence*, Psal. 131. 18. & 140. 2. & 109. 2. *Prov.* 12. 19, 22. & 18. 18.

IV. By this also you may see how unexcusable the enemies of *Christianity* and *Godliness* are, and for what it is that they hate and injure it. Is there any thing in all this Character of a Christian, that deserveth the suspicion or hatred of the world? what harm is there in it? or what will it do against them? I may say to them of his servants as Christ did of himself, *Joh.* 10. 32. *Many good works have I shewed you from my Father: for which of these works do ye stone me?* Many heavenly graces are in the sanctified Believer: For which of these do you hate and injure him? I know that *Goodness* is so far in credit with humane nature, that you will answer as the Jews did, *v.* 33. *For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy*: We hate them not for *Godliness*, but for *Hypocrisie* and *Sin*. But if

it

it be so indeed, 1. Speak not against Godliness it self, nor against the strictest performance of our duty. 2. Yea plead for *Godliness*, and countenance and promote it, while you speak against Hypocrisie and Sin. 3. Send chuse out the Hypocrite whose Character is here truly set before you; and let him be the object of your enmity and distaste: Let it fall on those that are *worldlings* and *time-servers*, and will stretch their consciences to their carnal interest, and can do any thing to save their skin; and being false to Christ, can hardly be true to any of their Superiours, but only in subordination to themselves. As it is said of *Constantius*, that he commanded that all his servants should be turned out of their places that would not renounce Christianity: And when he had thereby tryed them, he turned out all the Apostates, (and kept in the sincere) and told them; They could not be true to him, that were not true to their God and Saviour. 4. Send see that you be not *Hypocrites* your selves. You profess your selves Christians: and what is it to be a Christian indeed, you may here perceive. If any that fall under the character of Hypocrites (or worse) shall vilifie or hate the *sincere Christians* as Hypocrites, what a horrid aggravation of their Hypocrisie will it be?

Indeed it is the *best* and *strongest* Christians that have most of the hatred both of the *Unbelieving* and the *Hypocritical* world. And for my own part I must confess, that the very observation of the *universal implacable* enmity, which is undeniably seen throughout the world, between the womans and the serpents seed (being such as is not found among any other sorts of men on other occasions) doth not a little confirm my belief of the holy

Scriptures,

Scriptures, and ſeemeth to be an argument not well to be anſwered by any enemy of the Chriſtian cauſe. That it ſhould begin between the two firſt Brothers that ever were born into the world, and ſtop in nothing lower than ſhedding the righteous blood of *Abel* for no other cauſe, but becauſe the works of *Cain* were evil, and his Brothers righteous, 1 *Joh.* 3. 12, 13. And that it ſhould go down to the Prophets, and Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, and Primitive Saints, and continue to this day throughout the earth: and that the profeſſion of the ſame Religion doth not alter it, but rather enrage the enmity of Hypocrites againſt all that are *ſerious* and ſincere in the Religion which they themſelves profeſs: Theſe are things that no good account can be given of, ſave only from the predictions and verities of the word of God.

V. Alſo you may hence perceive, how exceedingly injurious *Hypocrites* and *ſcandalous* Chriſtians are, to the Name of Chriſt, and Cauſe of Chriſtianity and Godlineſs in the world. The blind malicious enemies of *Faith* and *Godlineſs*, inſtead of judging of them by the *ſacred Rule*, do look only to the *Profeſſors*, and think of *Religion* as they think of *them*. If they ſee the *Profeſſors* of Chriſtianity to be covetous, proud, uſurpers, time-ſervers, ſelf-exalters, cruel, ſchiſmatical, rebellious; they preſently charge all this upon their *Religion*; and *Godlineſs* muſt bear the blame; when all comes but for *want of Godlineſs* and *Religion*. And all the world hath not done ſo much againſt theſe and all other ſins, as Chriſt hath done. What if Chriſts *Diſciples ſtrive who ſhall be the greateſt?* Is it long of him, who girdeth himſelf to waſh and wipe their feet? and telleth them, that *except they be converted*,

converted, and become as little children, they shall not enter into the Kingdom of God, Mat. 18. 3. and telleth them, that though the Kings of the Gentiles do exercise Lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called Benefactors, yet ye shall not be so, Luk. 22. 25, 26. Is it long of him that hath said to the Elders, *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but being examples to the flock?* Who hath set the Elders such a lesson as you find in *Acts* 20. & 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2, 3. & 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. If any called Christians shall be truly schismatical, factious or turbulent, is it long of him that hath prayed the Father that they may all be One, *Joh.* 17. 21, 22, 23. and hath so vehemently intreated them *that they speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them, and that they be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgement*, 1 Cor. 1. 10. and hath charged them to *mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned, and to avoid them?* Rom. 16. 16, 17. If any called Christians shall be seditious, or rebellious, or as the Papists believe, that the Clergy are from under the Jurisdiction of Kings, and that the Pope hath power to excommunicate Princes, and absolve their subjects from their allegiance, and give their dominions to others, (as it is decreed in the General Council at the *Lateran* under *Innocent* the third, *Can.* 3.) Is all this long of Christ, who hath paid tribute to *Cesar*, and hath commanded that every soul be subject to the higher Powers, and not resist, and this for conscience sake, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3. and hath bid his

Disciples

Disciples rather to turn the other cheek, than to look revenge, Luk. 6. 29. and hath told them that they that did the sword (of reflection, or revenge, or cruelty) shall perish by the sword, Job. 18. 11. If any Christians will under pretence of Religion, set up a cruel Inquisition, or kill men to convert them, or become *self-lovers*, *covetous*, *boasters*, *proud*, *blasphemers*, *disobedient to Parents*, *unthankful*, *unholy*, *without natural affection*, *truce-breakers*, *false-accusers*, *incontinent*, *fierce*, *despisers of those that are good*, &c. Is this long of him that hath forbid all this? 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. If for their own domination, lust or covetousness, men called Christians, will be worse than Heathens and Wolves to one another, is this long of him that hath made it his *sheep-mark* by which we must be known to all men to be his Disciples, that *we love one another*? Joh. 13. 35. and hath told them, that if they *bite* and *devour one another*, *they shall be devoured one of another*? Gal. 5. 15. and hath *blessed* the *merciful*, as those that shall find mercy, Mat. 5. 7. and hath told men that what they do to his little ones, shall be taken as if it were done to himself, Mat. 25. and hath commanded the *strong to bear with the infirmities of the weak*, *and not to please themselves*, Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. and *to receive one another as Christ received us*, Rom. 15. 7. and hath told those that offend but *one of his little ones*, that it *were good for that man that a Millstone were hanged about his neck*, *and he were drowned in the depth of the Sea*, Matth. 18. 6. and hath told him that *smiteth his fellow servants*, *that his Lord will come in a day when he looketh not for him*, *and shall cut him asunder*, *and appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites*, *where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*, Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

I wonder

I wonder what men would have Christ do, to save himself and the Christian Religion from the imputation of the sins of the Hypocrites, and the weak distempered Christians. Would they have him yet make *stricter* Laws (when they hate these for being so strict already?) Or would they have him condemn sinners to more grievous punishment, when they are already offended at the severity of his threatnings? O what an unrighteous generation are his enemies, that blame the *Law* because men break it? and blame *Religion* because many are not *Religious* enough? As if the Sun must be hated, because that shadows and dungeons do want light; or *Life* and *Health* must be hated, because many are sick and pained by their diseases! But Christ will shortly stop all the mouths of these unreasonable men; and O how easily will he justifie himself, his Laws, and all his holy waies; when all *iniquity* shall be for ever silent! And though *it must needs be that offences come, yet wo to the world because of offences, and wo to the man by whom they come*, Mat. 18. 7. Luke 17. 1.

The wrong that Christ receiveth from *hypocrites* and *scandalous* Christians (of all ranks and places) is not to be estimated. These are the causes that Christianity and Godliness are so contemptible in the eyes of the world! that Jews, and Heathens, and Mahometans, are still unconverted and deriders of the Faith: Because they see such scandalous tyranny and worship among the Papists, and such scandalous lives among the greatest part of professed Christians in the world: whereas if the Papal Tyranny were turned into the *Christian Ministry*, (Luke 22. 25, 26, 27. and 1 *Tim.* 5. 17.) and their irrational fopperies, and historical hypocritical

worship were changed into a reverent, rational and spiritual worship, and the cruel, carnal, worldly lives of men called Christians, were changed into *Self-denial*, *Love* and *Holiness*. In a word, if Christians were *Christians indeed*, and such as I have here described from their Rule; what a powerfull means would it be of the conversion of all the unbelieving world? Christianity would then be in the eye of the world, as the Sun in its brightness, and the glory of it would dazle the eyes of beholders, and draw in millions to enquire after Christ, who are now driven from him by the sins of *Hypocrites* and *scandalous* Believers.

And this doth not contradict what I said before, of the *Enmity of the world to Holiness*, and that *the best are most abused by the ungodly*: For even this enmity must be *rationally* cured, as by the errour of *reason* it is fed. God useth by the power of intellectual light, to bring all those out of darkness whom he saveth, and so bringeth them from the power of Satan to himself, *Acts* 26. 18. Men hate not *Holiness* as *Good*, but as misconceived to be evil. *Evil* I say *to them*, because it is opposite to the sensual pleasures, which they take to be their chiefest good. And the way of curing their enmity, is by shewing them their errour; and that is by shewing them the excellency and necessity of that which they unreasonably distaste, *Acts* 26. 9, 10, 11, 14, 19. *Luke* 15. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Acts* 2. 36, 37.

VI. Lastly, In these *Characters* you have some help in the work of *Self-examination*, for the tryal both of the Truth and *Strength* of grace. I suppose it will be objected, that in other

Treatises

Treatises I have reduced all the infallible Marks of Grace to a smaller number. To which I answer; I still say, that the *predominancy* or *prevalency of the Interest of God as our God, and Christ as our Saviour, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, in the estimation of the Understanding, the Resolved Choice of the Will, and the Government of the Life, against all the worldly interest of the Flesh, is the only infallible sign of a justified regenerate soul.* But this *whole* hath *many parts*, and it is abundance of particulars *materially* in which this sincerity is to be found: Even all the sixty Characters which I have here named, are animated by that one, and contained in it. And I think to the most the full description of a Christian in his *essential* and *integral* parts, (yet shewing which are indeed *essential*,) is the best way to acquaint them with the nature of Christianity, and to help them in the tryal of themselves. And as it were an abuse of Humane Nature, for a Painter to draw the picture of a man without arms, or legs, or nose, or eyes, because he may be *a man* without them: so would it have been in me to draw only a maimed picture of a Christian, because a maimed Christian is a *Christian*. Yet because there are so many maimed Christians in the world, I have also shewed you their lamentable defects; not in a manner which tendeth to encourage them in their sins and wants under pretence of comforting them, but in that manner which may best excite them to their duty in order to their recovery, without destroying their necessary supporting comforts.

O happy Church, and State, and Family, which are compoſed of ſuch *confirmed Chriſtians*! where the predominate temperature is ſuch as I have here deſcribed! Yea happy is the place where Magiſtrates and Miniſters are ſuch, who are the vital parts of State and Church, and the inſtruments appointed to communicate theſe perfections to the reſt. But how much more happy is the New *Jeruſalem*, the City of the Living God, where the perfected ſpirits of the juſt in Perfect Life, and Light and Love, are perfectly *beholding*, and *admiring*, and *praiſing*, and *pleaſing* the Eternal God, their Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier for ever! where the leaſt and meaneſt is greater and more perfect than the *confirmed Chriſtian* here deſcribed! And where Hypocriſie is utterly excluded, and Imperfection ceaſeth, with ſcandal, cenſures, uncharitableneſs, diviſion, and all its other ſad effects: And where the ſouls that *thirſted* after *Righteouſneſs* ſhall be fully *ſatisfied*; and Love God more than they can now deſire! and never grieve themſelves or others with their wants or weakneſſes, or miſdoings any more. And, O bleſſed day, when our moſt Bleſſed Head ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, and ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe; whoſe weakneſs here occaſioned his diſhonour, and their own contempt! when the ſeed of Grace is grown up into Glory, and all the world whether they will or not, ſhall diſcern

cern between the Righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; between the clean and the unclean, and between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath: And though now our Life is hid with Christ in God, and it yet *appeareth not* (to the sight of our selves or others) *what we shall be; yet then when Christ who is our Life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in Glory*, Heb. 12. 22, 23. Rev. 22. 3, 4, 5, 14, 15. & 21. 3, 4, 8. 2 Thes. 1. 9, 10. Mat. 5. 4, 6. Mal. 3. 18. Eccles. 9. 2. 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3. Col. 3. 3, 4. Away then my soul from this dark, deceitfull and vexatious world! Love not thy diseases, thy fetters and calamities: Groan daily to thy Lord, and earnestly groan to be cloathed upon with thy house which is from Heaven, (2 Cor. 5. 2, 4.) that mortality may be swallowed up of Life! Joyn in the harmonious desires of the Creatures, who groan to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, *Rom.* 8. 20, 21, 22. *Abide in him, and walk in Righteousness, that when he shall appear, thou maist have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming*, 1 John 2. 28, 29. Joyn not with the evil servants, who say in their hearts, Our Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to smite their fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; whose Lord shall come in a day when they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of, and shall cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the Hypocrites, where shall be weeping & gnashing of teeth, *Mat.* 24. 48. 49, 50, 51.

O watch and pray that thou enter not into temptation! And be patient, for the Judge is at the door! Lift up thy head with earnest expectation, O my Soul, for thy Redemption draweth near! Rejoyce in hope before thy Lord, for he cometh: he cometh to judge the world in Righteousness and Truth. Behold, he cometh quickly, though faith be failing, and iniquity abound, and Love waxeth cold, and scoffers say, where is the promise of his coming! Make haste O thou whom my soul desireth! and come in Glory as thou first camest in Humility! and conform them to thy self in Glory, whom thou madest conformable to thy sufferings and humility! Let the Holy City New Jerusalem be prepared as a bride adorned for her husband: and let Gods Tabernacle be with men: that he may dwell with them and be their God, and wipe away their tears, and death, and sorrow, and crying, and pain may be no more, but former things may pass away! Keep up our Faith, our Hope, our Love! And daily vouchsafe us some beams of thy directing consolatory Light in this our darkness: And be not a stranger to thy scattered flock in this desolate wilderness! But let them hear thy voice, and find thy presence, and have *such conversation with thee in Heaven*, in the exercise of Faith, and Hope, and Love, which is agreeable to their low and distant state: Testifie to their souls that thou art their Saviour and Head, and that they abide in thee, by the Spirit which thou hast given them, abiding, and overcoming in them, and as thy Agent preparing them for eternal life. O let not our darkness, nor thy strangeness feed our

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odious Unbelief! O shew thy self more clearly to thy Redeemed ones! And come and dwell in our hearts by Faith! And by holy Love, let us dwell in God, and God in us! that we *grope* not after him, as those that worship *an unknown God*. O save us from Temptation! And if the messenger of Satan be sent to buffet us, let thy strength be manifest in our weakness, and thy grace appear sufficient for us. And give us the patience which thou tellest us we need, that having done thy will, we may inherit the promise: And bring us to the *sight* and fruition of our Creator, *of whom*, and *through whom*, and *to whom are all things*; *to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.*

FINIS.